

THE CONGO BASIN FOREST PARTNERSHIP

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICAN AFFAIRS

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

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THE CONGO BASIN FOREST PARTNERSHIP

Thursday, July 24, 2003

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICAN AFFAIRS,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, D.C.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:34 a.m. in Room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Lamar Alexander [chairman] presiding.

Present: Senators Alexander [presiding] and Feingold.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. LAMAR ALEXANDER, U.S. SENATOR FROM TENNESSEE

Senator ALEXANDER. Now I would like to invite the first panel for our hearing on the Congo Basin to come forward. While they come, I am going to begin my opening statement, and then we will go to Senator Feingold for his opening statement. Then we will hear from the panel. But I will introduce the witnesses in just a moment.

The Congo Basin is home to the second largest contiguous tropical forest in the world. Only the Amazon is larger. It extends over 700,000 square miles, into six African countries. It contains the most diverse grouping of plants and animals in Africa, including rare and endangered species such as the eastern lowland gorilla and the mountain gorilla, the chimpanzee and the white rhino.

Today's hearing on the Congo Basin Forest Partnership will focus on how the United States, in cooperation with other governments and nongovernmental organizations, can help preserve this ecological treasure in the heart of Africa and help African countries develop institutions that they need to grow and prosper.

Almost a year ago, in September of 2002, Secretary Powell announced the creation of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership. The United States also pledged \$53 million over the next 3 years toward this effort. The partnership's mission is to promote economic development, alleviate poverty, and improve local governance through natural resource conservation programs.

I am very excited about this mission, because it recognizes the larger economic and social value of effective conservation programs. By helping African nations in the Congo Basin establish strong national parks, we can also help them build institutions and communities around those parks. A national park that preserves a major habitat is more than a way to protect wildlife. It becomes a focal point for economic development. Local communities take greater pride in their home, and institutions are built that not only protect

the park but enhance the ability of local government to be more effective.

I grew up hiking on the trails of the Great Smoky Mountain National Park and live about 2 miles from its boundary, and that has certainly been our experience in Tennessee. The park is so important to the local economy that the Pigeon Forge Chamber of Commerce is actively advocating for more stringent environmental regulation to preserve air quality in the park. They recognize that environmental preservation is critical to creating jobs in the area.

Those of us from the Smoky Mountains take great pride in that park. It is a part of who we are. It is my hope that African countries, especially the communities surrounding new national parks, will come to recognize the same thing.

The Congo Basin Forest Partnership aims to protect 11 key landscapes spanning six countries in Central Africa. Many of these landscapes encompass multiple national parks and thousands of square miles. This is not a small, simple project. It is a major undertaking. If conservation efforts in the Congo Basin are to be done well, they will take considerable resources, time and effort, and commitment from both the international community and from the participating African governments.

Gabon took a giant step forward in this regard by designating 12 new national parks within its borders. Other countries' national parks are also encompassed by the landscapes designated by the partnership. I hope now that we see a high level of commitment to follow-through by the participating African governments.

It is not easy to maintain and preserve a national park, as our own Park Service can tell you. The Great Smokies Park, for example, has an annual budget of \$15.3 million and that leaves a maintenance backlog of an additional \$8 million every year, and that is just one park. If the Congo Basin Forest Partnership succeeds, it will establish a network of 30 or more such parks. While costs are certainly lower in Africa than in the United States, the resources required for this effort are substantial.

Today we will look at why this new effort at conservation in the Congo Basin is so important, how it is proceeding so far, and what needs to happen in the future to ensure its success. To do this, we have an outstanding panel of experts from both the administration and the environmental community.

But first, I would like to recognize my colleague from Wisconsin, Senator Feingold, for his opening statement. I should note that Senator Feingold has worked tirelessly to include the Milwaukee Zoo in this hearing. They have been involved for years in preserving bonobos—is that the way it is pronounced? Is it “bon-NOE-boe” or “bonn-a-boe.”

Senator FEINGOLD. You are the chairman.

Senator ALEXANDER. “Bon-NOE-boe?” We had a discussion on the bonobos, a type of African ape in the Congo; it would have provided a great perspective for the committee.

Senator Feingold.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. RUSSELL D. FEINGOLD,
U.S. SENATOR FROM WISCONSIN**

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And it is a wonderful zoo, by the way, one of the best.

I thank the chairman for calling this hearing and thank all the witnesses for being here today. Today this subcommittee will focus on the Congo Basin Forest Partnership Initiative, a multilateral effort that is slated to receive some \$53 million in U.S. Government support over the next 3 years. I know that Chairman Alexander has a strong interest in conservation issues and I commend him for the seriousness with which he is approaching the subcommittee's oversight responsibilities in this important area.

Certainly there is much to be gained, not just for Central Africa, not just for the United States, but for humanity, in protecting the diversity and majesty of the Congo Basin.

I also want to make plain that no one should interpret this hearing today as some sort of statement about the totality of the subcommittee's interest in the Central African region. I am so pleased that Senator Alexander and I have been able to work together in communicating this subcommittee's urgent concerns about the crisis in Ituri to the administration. Of course, those of us following African issues in the Congress have many ongoing concerns about the horrific ongoing abuses in that region and in the Kivu regions of the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), about the precarious situation in Burundi, and about overall regional instability and security. Millions of lives are at stake, and these issues certainly cannot and will not be sidelined.

As the Chairman indicated, I had hoped that the Zoological Society of Milwaukee (ZSM) would be able to be with us today, but due to a scheduling conflict their conservation coordinator was not able to be here. However, ZSM has prepared written testimony, and I ask that it be entered into the record, Mr. Chairman.

Senator ALEXANDER. It will be entered.

[The information referred to follows:]

STATEMENT SUBMITTED BY THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF MILWAUKEE

On behalf of the Zoological Society of Milwaukee, I gratefully accept the invitation by Senator Feingold to provide testimony regarding our organization's experience with and the effects of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) on our work in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The following account is a summary of our program and an overview of broad events that characterize our experience with the CBFP to date. I regret not being able to deliver testimony in person and supply any information that the Congressional committees may find useful, but I respectfully submit this report to the Senator's office while attending a conservation conference in Japan.

Please let it be understood that it is our intention to acknowledge the huge need for funding to help conserve the natural resources and heritage of central Africa. It is without question that the CBFP has the potential to help slow the destruction of the region's last remaining tropical forests and the animal species that perpetuate them. The Zoological Society of Milwaukee wishes to express its appreciation to those who have helped to forge this partnership and make funds available in the ultimate hope that lasting conservation is achieved. We provide the perspective of a non-CARPE organization that has active programs on the ground in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and we offer testimony in order to provide constructive dialogue for the modeling of large-scale funding initiatives.

Background

The Zoological Society of Milwaukee (ZSM) began conservation work in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1997 when it formally signed an agreement with the Congo's government authority overseeing national parks, the Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN). Specifically, the agreement authorized ZSM to conduct conservation research and support activities in the Salonga National Park, one of the 11 landscapes now targeted by the CBFP. The focus of ZSM's interest is the pygmy chimpanzee or the bonobo (*Pan paniscus*), a highly endangered chimpanzee species that is endemic to the Congo. The Salonga National Park is the only federally protected area for the bonobo, and despite the fact that the park had been originally created to protect this species, it was not known whether the species existed there or occurred in sufficient numbers to be self-sustaining. The Salonga is a vast tropical forest park, larger than the size of the state of Maryland, but because of its remoteness, the Salonga remained virtually unknown to the international scientific and conservation community. ZSM's objectives were to initiate a regional survey of the bonobo and other large mammals in the park in order to determine their distribution and abundance and identify specific threats to their survival.

Thus, in November 1997 in partnership with ICCN, ZSM launched an exploratory mission to the Salonga in search of the bonobo. The pilot study was the first of its kind to document the bonobo's presence in the park and to provide quantitative evidence to justify a large-scale survey and follow-up conservation efforts for this great ape. Shortly after this exploratory mission, ZSM began a major fund-raising campaign to invest up to \$235,000 (mostly from private sources) in a more extensive survey that would begin in 1998 and take approximately 18 months to complete. Tragically, however, civil war broke out in Congo in August 1998, and all fieldwork was suspended. Despite the war, ZSM continued to raise funds in order to resume survey work as soon as peaceful conditions returned. Moreover, ZSM maintained its presence in the Congo during the war and continued to invest in ancillary conservation work, such as the production of environmental educational materials and the provision of emergency support to the Salonga park guards.

Then in October 2000, with a cessation in combat and the help of the UN peace-keeping forces, ZSM returned to the Salonga to resume its survey work. While conditions were not suitable to mount a large-scale survey (due to the lack of transport, fuel and occasional security concerns), ZSM continued to lay the groundwork by conducting pilot surveys in various locations throughout the park. In a span of two years from October 2000 to October 2002, ZSM made five missions into Salonga and explored 11 sites in order to get a broad overview of the park and identify priority regions for survey in early 2003. Preparations for peace and the withdrawal of foreign troops did not begin in earnest until late 2001 to early 2002.

In addition to carrying out sites surveys, at the request of the United Nations Foundation and UNESCO, ZSM agreed to deliver salary funds to the park guards as part of the UNF/UNESCO program to support World Heritage Sites in Danger (titled: *Protecting World Heritage Sites During Times of Armed Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo*). With support from USAID (Kinshasa Mission), guard payments were combined with research excursions so that urgently needed support for Salonga could proceed in tandem with scientific investigations.

Advent of CBFP

ZSM became aware of the CBFP in the fall of 2002 from press releases. While attending an international meeting in Kinshasa in October 2002 on behalf of the UNESCO program, ZSM and other organizations heard about the CBFP initiative, but no details were provided. The essence of the information was that the U.S. government had awarded a grant of up to \$53 million for 11 "landscapes" (as they were referred to) in the Congo Basin countries. The UNESCO program was already giving financial assistance to at least two of the landscapes in DRC, namely, the Salonga and the Kahuzi Biega National Parks. Additionally, the distribution of funds was to be allocated, not by using an open granting mechanism inviting qualifying NGO's, but by designating three organizations to administer the funds: World Wildlife Fund, Wildlife Conservation Society, and Conservation International. At this point neither of these organizations had worked in Salonga. Inquiring further at the USAID offices in Kinshasa about the program, it was explained that the CBFP was in the process of being shaped, that little had been decided as to how the partnership would work among the lead organizations.

ZSM's chief concerns, since we had on-going programs in the Salonga landscape, were: how would our work be affected, would we be integrated, or would we find ourselves in competition? Additionally, were there funding opportunities for us, and if so, what was the mechanism to apply for these funds? From ZSM's perspective,

there was little information about the development of the CBFP, and ZSM had not been asked to supply information regarding Salonga or our on-going work in Salonga.

A meeting with USAID and potential participants was held in Kinshasa in March 2003 to decide on the operational mechanisms and to inform potential sub-partners. Unfortunately, however, ZSM received an invitation only very shortly before the Kinshasa meeting took place, and we were not permitted to send our Congolese government homologue as it was explained that due to resource limitations to provide travel funds, source-country government representatives could not attend. Thus, ZSM had neither representation nor opportunity to gather information.

One month later, in April 2003, ZSM met with officials in the USAID office in Kinshasa and with Dr. John Flynn, the director for the CBFP (under USAID's Central African Regional Program for the Environment—CARPE). Dr. Flynn very kindly explained how the CBFP mechanism had evolved to date (any mistakes in the following account are mine): That is, that the three (in one case, four) instigating organizations would submit proposals to USAID to request themselves as the “lead” administrators for the landscape. USAID would judge proposals based on established criteria such as the applicant's knowledge of the landscape, its ability to collaboratively develop a work plan, garner matching funds, and line up specialized sub-contractees to implement programs on the ground. He explained that if ZSM were to be integrated into this program that it would have to develop a relationship with the lead organizations. Who would be the lead for Salonga? This had yet to be determined. Furthermore, the source of funding that ZSM had previously received from USAID via the Kinshasa mission to help defray costs related to delivering park guard salaries would no longer exist—all the funds for the environment would now be channeled through the developing CBFP mechanism. Therefore, ZSM could not simply renew an existing grant, but we would have to reapply to the lead, non-government CBFP organization, as yet undesignated, and with which we may have been placed in a competitive situation.

From ZSM's perspective, there was no mechanism to respect existing on-going work, and it appeared to be up to the “lead” CBFP organization to collaborate with organizations of their choice. Unless USAID adopted a critical review process, there would be only an assumption that lead organizations exercise integrity, goodwill, and fairness.

Results

ZSM has witnessed a destabilizing effect with the central government. ICCN has recently issued a memo to members of CARPE/CBFP and to its existing partners asking for coordination of programs through their central authority and reminding organizations of the need to respect the contractual procedure of ICCN before claiming to undertake projects in DRC protected areas and the need to respect existing ICCN contracts.

Nevertheless, the reality is that small NGO's like ZSM, whether or not they wish to receive USAID funding, may have to either forfeit or alter their programs to fit under a new framework that has been imposed by the CBFP.

During the evolution of the CBFP, certain programs of ZSM's have been assumed by contending lead organizations, such as the large mammal survey. Consequently, ZSM will have to redirect existing resources and develop a complementary niche rather than duplicate what will be called for under the federally funded CBFP work plan. This point impacts private funding that ZSM has been successful in procuring.

ZSM has sought out and developed a relationship with one of Salonga's lead organizations. Pending USAID final approval, Salonga might be jointly managed by two organizations: WWF and WCS. Neither of these organizations has had a long-term presence in Salonga. However, during the process of these two organizations working out their respective roles, WWF has invited ZSM to state its interests in collaboration by contributing to the USAID proposal, submitting budgetary needs, and outlining its financial cost-share capacity.

The benefit that ZSM will derive from the CBFP is the sharing of responsibilities with organizations that possess the administrative capacity to build and develop the infrastructure of the park and to support the park staff.

The benefits of the CBFP to the Congo Basin will be that the—

- Simultaneous financing and cohesive planning under the CBFP for protected area support across a region should allow for cross fostering and resource sharing among conservation groups; and
- The leadership of the Congo Basin countries will have a unifying and common objective.

Even though the program's initial structure may have been inherently flawed (in that its creation was non-inclusive, and because it provides much power and resources to a limited field), there are just reasons for undertaking bold funding measures to preserve forest lands in central Africa. As of May 2003, ZSM has been reassured by the USAID Kinshasa Mission and by Ambassador Aubrey Hooks that every measure will be taken to ensure that proper, legal and ethical protocols will be in place to administer the CBFP award. Based on ZSM's relationship with and respect for these two offices, we conclude that there will ultimately be much good to come from this program. At the very least, these landscapes need a significant infusion of international funds if they are to survive and benefit humankind.

Recommendations for future initiatives

- Acknowledge and include existing organizations and programs much earlier in the award development.
- Avoid granting sole authority to three highly expert but highly competitive and bureaucratic organizations; create a process of review, verification and evaluation using an objective, diverse, non-government panel.
- Develop basic criteria whereby lead organizations choose and select credible sub-contracting organizations.
- Before submission of proposals for leadership and before selection of sub-partners, work plans should be devised with the input and provisional approval by the host country government authority.

Respectfully submitted, July 21, 2003,

GAY E. REINARTZ, PH.D.

Conservation Coordinator,

Zoological Society of Milwaukee

STATEMENT SUBMITTED BY SALLY JEWELL COXE, PRESIDENT OF THE BONOBO
CONSERVATION INITIATIVE

THE CONGO BASIN FOREST PARTNERSHIP

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to share our views. The Congo Basin Forest Partnership is an historic and timely initiative that has the potential to make a lasting impact on the future of this extremely important cradle of biodiversity on the planet. It is an honor to be involved as an active participant in the shaping and implementation of this important, collaborative effort.

The Bonobo Conservation Initiative is dedicated to the preservation of the bonobo (*Pan paniscus*), a rare and little known species of great ape, found only in the central Congo Basin in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Most people have not heard of bonobos, yet they are humankind's closest primate relatives along with chimpanzees. Dubbed the "make love, not war" apes, bonobos exhibit a peaceful, matriarchal society, based on sharing and cooperation. They have great power to serve as a flagship species, both for conservation and peace.

Bonobos are highly endangered; fewer than 5,000 may survive. There is an urgent need for a unified conservation effort focused on this species. Bonobos occupy some of the most important areas of biodiversity within the Congo Basin. Three out of the eleven "priority landscapes" identified by the CBFP encompass the bonobo habitat.

The Democratic Republic of Congo, the only home of the bonobo, is a vast, resource-rich nation the size of western Europe, which is just emerging from six years of civil war and foreign occupation. This war has taken the lives of approximately 3 million people—the greatest death toll from any war since WWII—and the primary cause of the conflict has been competition over illegal exploitation of natural resources.

Peace in the region is essential to the ethical and wise management of natural resources, and by the same token, programs which promote conservation and natural resource management are integral to promoting and maintaining peace.

If implemented with cultural sensitivity, the Congo Basin Forest Partnership can make a strong and positive impact for peace, stability, and improved quality of life for the citizens of the DRC. We hope that the U.S. government will concomitantly strengthen its support for peace process and reconstruction in the DRC, which will influence the entire region.

In all of our conservation programs in the DRC, the Bonobo Conservation Initiative recognizes the inextricability of humanitarian and livelihood concerns with conservation. We cannot successfully address biodiversity protection without dealing

with and working with the citizens of the Congo. Conservation programs must benefit and empower the people to manage their resources effectively, and it is for this reason that BCI is actively developing partnerships and programs which address health, conflict resolution, and livelihood concerns. We are working closely with the national leadership of the DRC, as well as on the grassroots level with local communities. Leveraging the investment in the CBFP, by partnering with other U.S. government-supported initiatives for health, democracy and governance, and sustainable development will be a key to achieving real and lasting results.

While it has been noted that the CBFP will initiate extremely important work on the ground, both the amount of funding allocated and the brief, 3-year duration of the program as currently envisioned, will be insufficient to achieve the goals. Increased U.S. commitment is needed, and further support from other nations must be encouraged and coordinated with the partnership.

BCI has found that even with the small amount of resources that it has been able to direct to the DR Congo in the past few years, that the results have been profound, most noticeably in the responses of the Congolese people with whom we have worked and spoken, and the emergence of the broad network of allies around the world who are committed to help in securing a sustainable future for the people of the Congo and their land, and for the biodiversity of that critically important part of the Earth.

With support from the Great Ape Conservation Fund administered through the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, BCI has discovered new groups of bonobos in two strategic areas and we are now working with the local people to create new community-based reserves, and related sustainable development programs. This is part of a larger goal to establish a multi-zoned "Bonobo Peace Forest," comprising a linked constellation of community-based reserves in a landscape of sustainable development and wise resource management. As it has with the small amount made available to support the USFWS administered funds established by the Great Ape Conservation Act and the African Elephant Act, the U.S. government can achieve much of great significance and lasting value through the CBFP.

The government of Australia is actively initiating a similar program of financial support for in-situ great ape conservation through the UNEP "Great Ape Survival Program." Perhaps this forward momentum can be built upon to include and strengthen Australia's participation in the CBFP.

The U.S. government can act as a model, precedent, and catalyst for comparable action by other Western governments, and to reinforce action by international organizations and alliances, such as the UN and the EU, to benefit the Congo, its forests and its people, and thus, the world.

We have seen the disastrous results of inattention and it is time to increase the exportation of the best that America has to offer: our optimism, our knowledge and pragmatic approach to innovative problem solving, our commitment to the rule of law and to government for, of, and by the people. After suffering years of hardship, deprivation, war, and exploitation, the Congolese people and the new transitional government led by President Joseph Kabila are showing an honest and transparent desire for allies and support for doing the right thing.

Well over one hundred years ago, the U.S.A. created the world's first national park. Fifty years later, the first national park in Africa was created in the Congo, in large part due to an American, Carl Akeley. It is appropriate that now, in the 21st century, the U.S.A. again take the lead in securing the resources of the Congo for the people of the Congo, by working with them, by working to ensure that they are given a fair hearing both locally and internationally, so that they can be the partners they must be if the Congo Basin is to remain a viable place both for people and the wondrous spectrum of fauna and flora within it.

Thank you again for the opportunity to contribute our voice and that of our Congolese partners to the record.

Senator FEINGOLD. I believe it provides a very helpful perspective from a small organization that was working in the area before the partnership was launched and is now adjusting to both the changes and the opportunities that this new endeavor has to offer.

So thank you, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to learning more about the Congo Basin Forest Partnership today. I will stay here as long as I possibly can. I am in the role of ranking member with regard to issues on the Judiciary Committee, where there may be a markup. So if I leave it is only for that reason, not out of a lack of interest in this, because I am very interested in it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator ALEXANDER. The Judiciary Committee is—I understand why you have to leave for that, and I will not say anything about the Judiciary Committee.

We are delighted with the witnesses we have today. Let me introduce the first panel. We have a second panel. I would like to make this suggestion. We ask you to—we will certainly take your written statement and make it a part of the record. If you could summarize your remarks in ten minutes or less, that would give us a little more time for questions and conversations, especially while Senator Feingold may be here. But we want to hear you say whatever you have to say.

The Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs is here, Mr. Walter Kansteiner. We have met on more than one occasion and I am grateful for that. He brought to my attention the Congo Forest, Congo Basin Forest Partnership, shortly after I became chairman of the subcommittee. So welcome, Walter. We are glad you are here.

John Turner has been long active in conservation affairs in this country. He was President and CEO of the Conservation Fund, which is where I guess I have gotten to know him before, and he shares my passion for national parks, except he likes the ones in the West the way I like the ones in the East. We like them both, I guess.

Mr. Keith Brown, Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator for Africa in USAID. He is stepping in for Connie Newman, who could not be here today. But even more important than that, he is from Memphis, Tennessee, and we are very proud of Mr. Brown.

Thanks to the three of you for coming, and we will start with you, Mr. Secretary, with your testimony, and then go to Mr. Turner and Mr. Brown. Then we will go to questions.

**STATEMENT OF WALTER H. KANSTEINER III, ASSISTANT
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR AFRICAN AFFAIRS**

Mr. KANSTEINER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, very much. Growing up in the North Shore of Chicago, I had the privilege to visit the Milwaukee Zoo and have fond memories of it. And also, spending my summers in western North Carolina, I too hiked the Smoky Mountains and paddled the rivers of Pisgah National Forest and perhaps really gained my love for the out of doors in that Tennessee-North Carolina area.

We do have a wonderful collegial team that works together on this thing called the Congo Basin Forest Partnership. John Turner brings tremendous experience, and so I will keep my remarks brief. Keith Brown has a great handle on exactly how we are rolling this program out and how we are keeping it on track. So I will be brief.

Senator Feingold, I heard you on the Ituri and the Kivus and I share your concern there. You might note that the UN Security Council will vote shortly on MONUC (United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo) troop mandate increase. So I think that is a very good sign. I know we worked together on that and I appreciate your support on that.

Senator ALEXANDER. Thank you for that, Mr. Secretary. Senator Feingold, thank you for saying that earlier. Interesting to me, if I

may interrupt, Ambassador Negroponte told me in a recent visit that 60 percent of the business of the UN Security Council is Africa today.

Mr. KANSTEINER. Exactly. Thank you.

Conserving the Congo Basin Forest is a priority and a passion that all of us on this panel have, and I am proud to say that Secretary of State Colin Powell shares as well. He fondly recalls often his time in Gabon in the rain forest, where Mike Fay, who is the real expert who is going to testify after us here, showed us through the coastal rain forest of Gabon and all the fantastic botany and potential wildlife that is there.

Unfortunately, as the Secretary of State reminds us, his security detail, which included numerous helicopters, boats, and everything else, scared every single animal away long before we got there. So we made an effort, but he did in fact see the fantastic environment that still remains in Gabon and throughout the whole Congo Basin.

After we took that trek with Mike Fay, we returned to beach-side roundtable discussions with the NGO community. John Turner was there, and it was with great pride that Colin Powell said, after listening to the conservationists that are working this issue day and night, "From this day forward, I am a conservationist for Africa and always will be." So we took that as a great success, and Secretary Powell has been a tremendous supporter of, and advocate for, all the programs that we pursue.

As you mentioned, Mr. Chairman, the Congo Basin is the second largest lung of the world, that is rain forest, that provides the world the oxygen that we need. It is a global lung, and we have to recognize it as such, and we have to work together with our African partners to preserve it. It is a treasure house that has tremendous biodiversity, that has unbelievable potential, not only for the people that live there, and that is very important. These people have to be able to tap in to that potential in a responsible and sustainable way.

But it also holds treasures for the world. We do not even fully know the biodiversity that is there. So it is exciting to protect it. Because it is a unique ecosystem, it is also exciting to protect for the next generation and generations to follow.

It needs good governance. It needs governance in the area that will recognize it and prioritize it and in fact protect it. I will never forget sitting in President Bongo's office with Mike Fay and John Turner going through some of the fantastic photographs that Mike Fay and his partners from National Geographic took of the Congo Basin Forest—brilliant animal shots, but also fantastic flora and fauna, and unbelievable rain forests.

President Bongo was amazed looking at these photographs of his own country. He did not realize the extent of what these resources are and how fantastic this landscape is. I think that was really the beginning—this was 2½ years ago—where President Bongo realized this is a priority for him. In fact, some months later, along with Secretary Powell, he announced that he was setting aside 10 percent of his country's land mass to create national parks that will in fact protect this area, not only for the people and the wildlife, but for the world.

We are proud to be working with the likes of President Bongo and others within the Congo Basin Forest Partnership. There are six African countries, and it is important for us to identify those. They are Gabon, Cameroon, Central African Republic, the DRC—that is, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kinshasa capital—the Congo, capital in Brazzaville, and Equatorial Guinea. These are the six African countries that make up our African governmental partners.

I am going to let John talk a little bit about how that partnership actually works and some of the 11 landscapes that in fact have been identified as the core priorities for these six countries, for this huge area known as the Congo River Basin. We have 11 landscapes that are the priority, that have been identified along with the NGO community. Quite frankly, the NGO community has been a true leader. Mike Fay and others like him have been fantastic allies, hard workers who have really done the difficult on-the-ground assessments.

I would like to conclude with just one story about how the Congo River Basin Forest Partnership Initiative not only helps preserve ecosystems but, in fact, gets the communities that live in it on a better footing. During the war in the DRC, border patrols between Uganda, Rwanda, and Congo had no way of communicating. Troops were flowing in, troops were flowing out. They were flowing through parks and reserves. In fact, mountain gorillas' habitat was highly endangered because there was so much troop movement coming in from all sides. It was under direct threat.

Yet those anti-poaching units from all three of those countries remained at their posts, stayed true to what their mission was, that is to protect the habitat. But most importantly, through an NGO and U.S. Government funded program, we bought them communication gear, walkie-talkie systems, where they could actually communicate between each other to let each other know what was happening and how in fact that environment was being degraded and how it was being threatened.

That national park ranger communication was the beginning of an actual ability for these three governments to talk to each other. It was the beginning of an ability for a peace process to start unfolding. It was through some of these anti-poaching units in these national parks, because the three countries simply were not communicating with each other. It was one of those very on-the-ground ways that protecting our environment is also becoming conflict resolution.

It is a good story and we want to repeat it as in fact we unfold the Congo Basin Forest Partnership. I will conclude there, sir.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kansteiner follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WALTER H. KANSTEINER III

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, thank you for inviting me to testify here today. Conserving the Congo Basin Forests is a topic that Secretary Powell and I are passionate about. Secretary Powell has had the opportunity to get a first-hand feel for the region's conservation potential and challenges when he visited Gabon last September following President Bongo's announcement of his decision to create a new national park network. The visit left the Secretary even more convinced of the importance of conservation in the region even though, as he has wryly noted, his security detail scared away all the wildlife before his walk.

The Congo Basin Forest is a global treasure in a region of both great challenge and great opportunity. The forest is not only a “global lung” but a rich store of biodiversity and a source of livelihood for millions. The fate of Africa’s forests and natural resources is inextricably linked to questions of governance, national and regional peace, security and economic growth. Poor conservation practices and conflict over resource use has the potential to undermine stability and hamper prospects for growth. Conversely, sound natural resource management will help promote sustainable trade and economic growth, transparency and openness, and mitigate health threats. That is why we consider conserving Africa’s irreplaceable natural resources as one of our central priorities in Africa.

The Congo Basin Forest is the second largest area of contiguous tropical forest in the world; the Amazon Basin is the largest. Much of the forest remains relatively intact but pressures and threats to the forest are growing, including from rapid urbanization, uncontrolled timber exploitation and logging, and unsustainable commercial bushmeat hunting. The lack of alternative economic opportunities coupled with limited capacity and resources for enforcement leave even protected areas vulnerable to poaching and illegal logging.

The good news is that it is not too late for the forest of the Congo Basin, nor are we starting from scratch. The U.S. government, largely through the Central African Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) and the Smithsonian Institution, the European Union, and (NGO) advocates and activists have been active in the region for years. They have demonstrated, with limited resources, that well-designed programs can work.

The Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) is an exciting addition to these efforts. The CBFP is a partnership of countries, NGOs, and private businesses dedicated to the conservation and sustainable use and management of the forest. It reflects the Administration’s high-level commitment to the Congo Basin Forest and a strengthened commitment by the countries of the region to work in partnership with the international community. The six African countries whose forests are covered by the CBFP are Cameroon, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and the Republic of Congo. Our work in the CBFP reflects a shared commitment to forge a new, more productive and effective, way of working with each other in true partnership. It is imperative that we use our scarce resources wisely and not only listen to each other but hear and understand the messages being conveyed, even if they are not always what we think we want to hear.

Each of the six African countries of the Congo Basin Forest region has committed to address the challenge of conserving its natural forest heritage while providing jobs, training, and income for the people in the region who depend on its natural resources. As economic pressures mount to capitalize on the forest, the countries have made it clear they recognize their important stake in the CBFP.

Just as the CBFP is building on previous international community efforts, it is also building on previous African-led efforts. In 1999, the Yaoundé Declaration, signed by the six heads of state of the Congo Basin, set forth strong commitments for regional cooperation to improve resource management, create trans-border protected areas, harmonize forest policies, combat poaching, and develop sustainable use approaches in consultation with rural populations and economic operators. The process launched at Yaoundé led to the creation of a Council of Ministers for Forests of Central Africa (COMIFAC), which includes members beyond the CBFP countries. It is responsible for coordination of forest policy among the member governments. COMIFAC has developed a “Plan of Convergence” and an action plan for the region that will serve as a reference point for CBFP activities. Other major forest initiatives in the region have been brought under the COMIFAC umbrella, most notably the African Timber Organization and the Conference on Tropical Forest Ecosystems of Central Africa, which sponsors dialogue with civil society. COMIFAC recently held a meeting to further elaborate their action plan and consider how best to engage and work with the CBFP. We hope that COMIFAC will continue to strengthen its ability to catalyze regional cooperation and implementation of sound forestry policies. Several of the international CBFP partners are assisting COMIFAC’s efforts to strengthen its capacity and effectiveness in the region.

We should not delude ourselves into thinking that success is assured. Many institutions in the region remain fragile and old habits and attitudes about the use and value of the environment do not change overnight. Nevertheless, we have seen a number of examples of progress.

At the WSSD, Gabon announced the creation of 13 national parks, which encompass ten percent of Gabon’s land area, and the Gabonese government is cooperating closely with the U.S. government and environmental organizations to protect its natural heritage. The Republic of Congo is collaborating on an innovative public-pri-

vate partnership in the Kabo forest concession to control poaching and ensure sustainable forestry. This area is part of one of the 11 key landscapes on which the U.S. contribution to the CBFP will focus. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, while the country was still at war, conservation rangers on opposite sides of the lines remained steadfastly at their posts protecting wildlife and forests and easing communications across lines and between the sides. Cameroon continues to build capacity in the forestry sector and civil society is actively pressing for stronger sustainable management of the country's natural resources. In 2001 Cameroon formally protected the Lobeke Park, which is a crucial part of the tri-national Sangha complex, which includes parks in the Central African Republic and Republic of Congo. Equatorial Guinea and the Central African Republic were eager participants in the first organizational meeting of the CBFP in Paris and have declared their commitment to the CBFP.

In the months since the Paris meeting, the U.S. partners have been hard at work developing programs with in-country partners. As you will hear from our USAID colleague, project proposals are now being reviewed and decisions should be made in the coming weeks.

As the example of the rangers in the Democratic Republic of Congo illustrates, conservation can be a win-win situation that advances broader policy objectives and helps build trust, not simply between warring sides but between governments and communities. Conservation is not a people versus animals and trees debate. When wisely pursued, it is a means to ensure that biodiversity is protected and poverty is reduced through the creation of sustainable economic opportunities. Well-managed protected areas and buffer zones can be sources of jobs and generators of revenue, especially when local communities are full partners in the development and management of the areas. The conservation of biodiversity can produce revenue as a result of research into natural products that could have health or other applications (such work is being done by the Smithsonian Institution and the National Institutes of Health in Cameroon and they would like to replicate it elsewhere in the region). Responsible mining and forest concessions can ensure both jobs and sustainable resource exploitation to fuel economic growth and trade. Controlling poaching and unsustainable commercial bushmeat trade promotes respect for the rule of law, preserves biodiversity, and mitigates health risks. On the other hand, unsustainable logging practices and continued reliance on bushmeat may have negative health effects. Evidence is mounting that recent Ebola outbreaks in Congo-Brazzaville and Gabon were triggered when hunters and villagers came into contact with infected animals.

Conservation and sound resource management, by definition, require transparency and inclusiveness. The complexities of protecting biodiversity and meeting the sometimes conflicting needs of affected communities can best be addressed through open processes. The programs that the United States supports in the Congo Basin place a premium on these qualities and seek to build a capacity and constituency for conservation among the people of the region. For example, we have supported participatory mapping exercises of the forest and provided small grants to local NGOs to carry out work such as education and monitoring.

Conservation programs will not immediately produce flourishing democracies, regional cooperation, vibrant civil societies, or accelerating economic growth but they can serve as hopeful and empowering examples that can radiate well beyond the realm of conservation. The process is long and far from linear, but through the CBFP and our assistance programs, we are going to do our utmost to make the positive vision a reality. As Secretary Powell emphasized during his visit to Gabon, we believe our money spent on conservation in the Congo Basin is money well-spent. The United States has a history of investing in the environment and we are committed to continuing the tradition. As Secretary Powell said, "We don't see this as a one-time shot. We are in this for the long run."

Senator ALEXANDER. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.
Mr. Turner.

**STATEMENT OF JOHN TURNER, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF
STATE FOR OCEANS, INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL
AND SCIENTIFIC AFFAIRS**

Mr. TURNER. Good morning, Mr. Chairman and Senator Feingold. It is certainly a pleasure for me to appear with my colleagues Walter and Keith to talk about the Congo Basin Forest Partnership, and thank you for your personal interest. Mr. Chairman, this

exciting project has the potential of being the largest and boldest conservation project ever attempted.

But I do want to take this opportunity this morning to thank you for your leadership and lifetime passion for conservation. Especially when I was at the Conservation Fund working with Pat Noonan, your leadership, Governor Sundquist, Gary Meyers, the effort to protect state parks and state forests in your wonderful State of Tennessee, I think together we did over 100,000 acres in the last few years in your great State of Tennessee.

Mr. Chairman, as we are all aware, nearly 2 weeks ago President Bush ended his historic trip to Africa. He found it, as you discussed this morning, certainly a continent full of hope and promise, yet facing enormous challenges. Accompanied on that trip by my friend Walter, the President spoke forthrightly about the ravaging effects of poverty, corruption, HIV-AIDS, and the regional wars on the people of Africa.

At the same time, President Bush also addressed how we in the United States can support Africans in achieving during this decade rising prosperity and expanding peace. I believe the Congo Basin Partnership is a major effort to enhance the future of the citizens of the west central region of this great continent.

The Congo Basin project is also, I believe, reflective of this President's unprecedented commitment to reduce deforestation and conserve tropical forests around the world. In addition to the Congo Basin effort, other components of President Bush's leadership are efforts in the Amazon, expanding the Tropical Forest Conservation Act, utilizing our remote sensing capacity to monitor what is going on in forests, and the exciting initiative to combat illegal logging which will be announced by Secretary Powell next Monday.

The Congo Basin is a global treasure and is extremely immense, as you pointed out. This area is equivalent to the size of our five States of California, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and Utah combined. As was pointed out, Secretary Powell launched the Congo Basin Partnership September of '02 at the World Summit on Sustainability in Johannesburg. At the end of the summit, the Secretary did travel to Gabon to review and discuss the potential of this wonderful partnership and to thank President Bongo and the people of Gabon for the commitment they have made to protect their tropical landscape. I believe this was an historic first-ever trip highlighting forest conservation by a Secretary of State from the United States.

Mr. Chairman, the United States believes this partnership holds tremendous promise for this resource-rich region that has suffered much over the decade from poverty and instability and too often gut-wrenching violence. These forests and their wildlife are major assets to the social, economic, and environmental health of the Africans. The partnership is a powerful mechanism for economic and social development as well as advancing our environmental goals with our partners in Central Africa, including the fight against illegal logging and associated trade and corruption.

In broad terms, the U.S. priorities for the partnership are to provide the people of the region a sustainable means of livelihood through well-managed forest concessions, sustainable agricultural practices, and an integrated ecotourism program. These approaches

will improve forest and natural resource governance through community-based management, combating illegal logging and bush meat trade, and enforcing anti-poaching efforts.

The partnership will also help the Congo Basin countries develop a network of effectively managed parks, protected areas, and ecological corridors which encompass coverage of over 25 million—25 million—acres.

We have taken a number of steps during the last few months toward this end. In January, we co-hosted with the French government an international meeting of the Congo Basin Partnership. This brings senior level administrative folks from the United States who traveled to the Congo Basin to assess the critical needs for capacity-building and training. Ongoing consultations in the region and among State, AID, and other Federal entities, such as the Forest Service, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Park Service, the Department of Commerce, NASA, USGS, and the Smithsonian Institute, and OPIC, are developing collaborative training and capacity-building efforts under this partnership.

The administration is committed to investing up to \$53 million in the partnership to the year 2005. Working closely with regional governments and organizations, U.S.-based conservation NGO's such as the Wildlife Conservation Society, World Wildlife Fund, and the World Resource Institute plan to significantly expand their programs in nearly a dozen critical forest landscapes. Their efforts, along with the American Forest and Paper Association and the Society of American Foresters, represent an essential element in this developing partnership. However, without the strong support and commitment of African governments and people this partnership could not succeed.

Mr. Chairman, we feel we are on the right track and have the right commitments from the partnership for developing the resource base to make the Congo Basin Forest Partnership work. Finally, let me add that this partnership gives America an opportunity to share our insights and lessons learned since creating and maintaining the world's first national park, Yellowstone, in my native State of Wyoming. Setting aside wild lands and wild critters for their own intrinsic value certainly was one of our country's best inventions and one that we can share with neighbors around the world.

We want to do our part the help improve the lives of the people of west-central Africa and to build a lasting legacy for current and future generations.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Turner follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN F. TURNER

Mr. Chairman and distinguished and honorable Senators, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for the opportunity to share my views about the opportunities and challenges ahead of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership.

The Congo Basin Forest is a global treasure, the world's second largest intact tropical forest, spanning 700,000 square miles—equivalent to California, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and Utah combined. It catches water from millions of acres of pristine forest, which provide a livelihood to millions of Africans. Within these forests is a wealth of incredible species of plants and animals, many of which were unknown until recently. The Congo Basin Forest must be protected and conserved for

the economic and environmental good of Africa and for the ecological heritage of humankind.

Secretary Powell launched the Congo Basin Forest Partnership on September 4, 2002, at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa. This partnership—of governments, international organizations, non-governmental environmental organizations, industry, and civil society—recognizes that creating conditions for sustainable development is much too big a task for governments to tackle alone. Strong public-private partnerships are crucial to mobilizing greater interest and financial support and to moving away from old, inefficient, ineffective ways of doing business. A non-hierarchical relationship among partners is essential to the partnership.

Following the launch in South Africa, Secretary Powell visited Gabon for the inauguration of Gabon's national park system, a historic, first-ever trip highlighting forest conservation by a Secretary of State. The U.S. has sent high-level interagency teams into the Congo Basin region to assess critical needs for capacity-building training. My bureau, along with the Bureau of African Affairs and USAID, has developed a regular interagency dialogue and has hosted exchanges with multiple Congo Basin Forest Partnership stakeholders. The Department of State held its first-ever symposium on ecotourism to explore ways to develop that industry in the Congo Basin. We hope to build on the knowledge gained from the symposium and work with the region to make wise choices for sustainable development. Secretary Powell underscored critical links between conservation and sustainable management of forest resources at his Open Forum event celebrating Earth Day. One of our Congo Basin Forest Partnership partners, Dr. Jane Goodall, was the keynote speaker.

This September, the Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival will highlight the efforts being made to conserve and sustainably manage Central African forests. The Congo Basin Forest Partnership will receive a conservation action award. President Bongo of Gabon will receive an award for setting aside over 10,000 square miles to create a system of 13 national parks. The Republic of Congo's President, Denis Sassou-Nguesso, has also been invited to receive recognition for his country's leadership role in the Congo Basin Forest Partnership, notably in identifying commercial bush meat sales as a critical conservation problem and in creating laws to address it, as well as in setting aside more than 13 percent of Congo's forests as protected areas.

Mr. Chairman, the United States has promoted the Congo Basin Forest Partnership and is providing a significant contribution to it because these forests and their wildlife are of global significance, because they are a major factor in the social, economic, and environmental health of our Congo Basin country partners, and because this is a wonderful opportunity to build on existing structures of cooperation between governments, NGOs, and the private sector in the region. I note that without the strong support and commitment of African people and governments, as well as civil society and private sector organizations, this partnership could not exist. It is a powerful mechanism for advancing our environmental goals in Central Africa, including the fight against illegal logging and associated trade and corruption. It is in our strategic interest to improve the ability of our African partners to enforce their laws and sustainably manage their resources. By promoting conservation and sustainable development in Central Africa, we strengthen our partnerships in the region and help create viable alternatives to fear, greed, and corruption.

In broad terms, U.S. priorities for the Partnership are to provide people sustainable means of livelihood through well-managed forestry concessions, sustainable agriculture, and integrated ecotourism programs; to improve forest and natural resource governance through community-based management, combating illegal logging, and enforcing anti-poaching laws; and to help the Congo Basin countries develop a network of effectively managed parks, protected areas, and ecological corridors.

The Congo Basin Forest Partnership is also intended to help people obtain long-term sustainable forest-based employment through the sustainable management of natural resources whether through ecotourism, wildlife law enforcement, reduced impact logging, or park management. This effort will improve the economy of the region, and the economic, political, and environmental benefits will be apparent to all.

The Administration is committed to invest up to \$53 million in the Congo Basin Forest Partnership through the year 2005. The U.S. investment has already leveraged additional support from other donors, and has spurred on collaboration between USAID and the State Department on developing strategic objectives for U.S. priorities in the Congo Basin Forest Partnership. The partnership has sparked shared coordination efforts by USDA, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Park Service, NASA, and others.

Meanwhile, U.S.-based conservation NGOs plan to expand significantly their programs in the eleven Congo Basin Forest landscapes identified as critical to biodiversity conservation in the Congo Basin. These Congo Basin Forest Partnership stakeholders' proposals to USAID's Central African Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) are presently under review by a USAID/State team in Kinshasa. We have every confidence, given the NGOs and USAID/CARPE's heroic efforts to get programs up and running quickly, that the obligation of funds for these programs will be achieved by September 30, roughly one year from the launching of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership, and nine months since its first organizational meeting. U.S.-based NGOs have committed to matching the United States government's financial contribution for work in these eleven landscapes. I would like to note our particular appreciation for the outstanding commitment of our NGO partners, whose efforts represent an essential element in this developing partnership.

We are especially pleased that the forest industry, including the American Forest and Paper Association (AF&PA), and professional societies such as the Society of American Foresters (SAF), are eager to bring their technical expertise and financial resources to bear in the Congo Basin countries.

None of these U.S. accomplishments can stand on their own without a healthy commitment to building the international dimensions of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership. In January we co-hosted, with the French government, an international meeting of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership. At that meeting, partners agreed that the United States would be the facilitator of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership for at least its first two years. We also committed to sponsoring an African co-facilitator, resident in the Congo Basin, to be a Congo Basin Forest Partnership liaison with African partners, in order to ensure that their priorities and interests are addressed.

We note that a number of partners, European and African, have been meeting together this past spring and summer, planning their own contributions to our shared Congo Basin Forest Partnership objectives. The U.S. has been invited to contribute to these meetings in the spirit of cooperation within the Congo Basin Forest Partnership framework. An international meeting is being considered for the region this fall. It would improve coordination and energize cooperation. Our goal is to consolidate these relationships, which merge the interests of governments with agricultural, forestry, and conservation interests, across public and private sectors, into the largest and most successful partnership in Africa, and make it a viable forest conservation model for the world.

We are undertaking a comprehensive inventory of forest and wildlife-related projects and programs in the region, which will help us coordinate our strategy and identify gaps that need to be filled. We are constructing a web page to link the partners and their programs. There is a great deal more we can do with your support. We are confident that we are on the right track, have the right commitments from partners, and are developing the resource base to make the Congo Basin Forest Partnership work.

It is important to bear in mind, though, that we are still learning to build this new partnership. We must reconcile the time it takes to restructure relationships among the stakeholders and the imperative to get real projects under way in support of our objectives. We are learning to innovate, to rearrange public-private relationships, and to build a Congo Basin Forest Partnership that is credible and accountable. Here I would like to express my particular appreciation for the work the Smithsonian Institution has done to ensure that all the stakeholders have a voice.

We expect to see more progress over the next year, as we develop new political and economic partnerships, and make measurable progress in stopping forest degradation in the Congo Basin—to the economic benefit of the region and to the ecological benefit of the planet.

Thank you very much. I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Senator ALEXANDER. Thank you, Mr. Turner.
Mr. Brown.

**STATEMENT OF KEITH BROWN, SENIOR DEPUTY ASSISTANT
ADMINISTRATOR, BUREAU FOR AFRICA, U.S. AGENCY FOR
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Mr. BROWN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee: Thank you for inviting me to testify before you at this very important hearing on the Congo Basin Forest Partner-

ship. I am pleased to join Assistant Secretaries Kansteiner and Turner for this hearing. It is important to note that the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Department of State have been in close collaboration throughout the development of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership. We will continue to work together along with other U.S. Government agencies, African governments, and U.S. and African conservation and business groups to ensure a strong partnership for the Congo Basin.

My colleagues have provided excellent overviews of how the CBFP has evolved since its unveiling at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in September of 2002. USAID's Central African Regional Program for the Environment, or CARPE, our most prominent natural resource management program in Africa, is the primary implementation vehicle for the U.S. contribution to the CBFP.

With the committee's indulgence, I would like to focus today on three main areas: CARPE as the foundation for a strong effective partnership; a review of steps taken to date, including those in the area of selecting implementing entities; and an outline of the steps to come.

We have three priorities for the CBFP and CARPE. The first is to encourage communities in the Congo forest region to achieve a sustainable means of livelihood through well-managed forestry concessions, sustainable agriculture, and integrated ecotourism programs. The second is to help the people of Central Africa develop a network of effectively managed national parks, protected areas, and corridors. The third is to improve forest and natural resource governance by encouraging community-based management and economic uses of natural resources, combating illegal logging, and enforcing anti-poaching laws.

The CBFP represents a unique opportunity to achieve enhanced environmental conservation in Central Africa. Mr. Chairman, as you mentioned in your statement, Congo Basin Forest Partnership activities will be linked to the conservation of 11 key landscapes in 6 countries in Central Africa. A landscape is defined as an area of land whose use is constrained.

The CBFP landscapes are composed of three distinct areas: national parks, buffer zones around national parks, and corridors between the parks and buffer zones. The landscapes approach offers a bigger picture strategy than some previous efforts that mainly focused on national parks and protected areas. By combining protected areas, buffer zones, and mixed use areas into broad landscapes, a more holistic plan can be developed that meets the particular needs of each landscape.

With the landscape approach, implementing partners should have more leeway to address the social, economic, and political causes of the threats to the critical resources in the region. Only in this manner can we expect to achieve demonstrable progress in the economic development, institutional capacity, and conservation objectives of the CBFP.

USAID is committed to working with the CBFP partners to closely monitor performance, and we remain prepared to assist the partners to design implementation plans that ensure the highest possible degree of results.

The Congo Basin Forest Partnership is a partnership based on helping the people of Central Africa maintain their forests. A list of illustrative activities includes: training for African rangers and game scouts, dissemination of materials that help provide African citizens with information to participate in natural resource governance, support for the development of African community enterprises linked to landscape conservation, support for the adoption and strengthening of legislation related to natural resource management, including protected areas and forestry, support for regional processes for communication, collaboration, and policy coordination, and large-scale monitoring of forest access, land use, and deforestation using remote sensing technologies.

Toward this end, and as you have mentioned, the U.S. Government proposes to invest up to \$53 million over 4 years, of which approximately \$48 million will be provided by USAID through the CARPE. The combination of the CBFP facilitation process and the field-based USAID CARPE management affords us an excellent mechanism to ensure that U.S. Government resources are serving the most critical needs and are efficiently and effectively being spent on achieving results.

Another key component of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership is the past work of the partners in CARPE. CARPE was launched in 1995, and it has helped to fill a major void by collecting important data on the Congo Basin. For the past 7 years, CARPE has received annual USAID funding of \$3 million to address environmental needs in 9 countries in the region. CARPE will continue doing work in these areas while the Congo Basin Forest Partnership focuses on the 11 landscapes. It is essential to an effective partnership that there be a blending of the strengths of CARPE with the new emphases of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership.

Furthermore, USAID is now emphasizing a transition for CARPE, moving from learning lessons to applying these lessons to action on the ground. In order to facilitate this change in strategy, in January of 2003 USAID relocated CARPE management from USAID headquarters in Washington to the Congo Basin. We believe that this change will greatly strengthen our presence in the basin, affording many more opportunities to interact with all partners in assessing and addressing problems and opportunities on the ground.

USAID has already taken important action to support those entities which will implement conservation programs in the Congo Basin. USAID also broadly and extensively involved the interested U.S. Government agencies in developing detailed criteria for the evaluation of proposals for these landscapes. These agencies include the State Department, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, and NASA.

Taking advantage of completed agreements already in place, USAID has requested applications from four major U.S. environmental NGO's and is currently in the final stages with the State Department of reviewing these applications. Critically important in these applications will be evidence that the NGO's have secured cooperation from the host government in the development of field activities, as well as evidence that other NGO's with specialized expertise can partner in field implementation.

A portion of the funding will also support certain U.S. Government agencies with specific strengths that complement the conservation NGO's. Our intent is that all fiscal year 2003 funding will be put in place for our implementing partners by September 30th of this year so that they can proceed expeditiously.

As we look to the future, we realize that there are special opportunities to address environmental issues in the 11 landscapes that will be the particular emphasis of U.S. Government resources within the Congo Basin Forest Partnership. We intend to ensure that the focus of CARPE will be on producing identifiable results within those landscapes which will be reported back to Congress.

In order to ensure that U.S. Government resources make a difference, we must respect the fact that this effort depends upon the people living in the Congo Basin to achieve a lasting positive impact on the second largest tropical rain forest in the world. We have every intention of making that a high priority.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the committee for drawing attention to this important administration initiative and I look forward to taking your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Brown follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KEITH BROWN

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you for inviting me to testify here today at this important hearing on saving the Congo Basin. I am pleased to join my colleagues from the Department of State. It is important to note that the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Department of State have been in close collaboration throughout the development of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP). We will continue to work together along with other U.S. government agencies, African governments, and U.S. and African conservation and business groups to ensure a strong partnership for the Congo Basin. We have great hopes for the future of the Congo Basin because in the words of Secretary of State Colin Powell:

[those] ... in this partnership, have agreed to work together to help the countries of the Congo Basin create and manage protected forest areas, such as national parks. ... [and] will work together to combat illegal logging and other unsustainable practices, and ... implement programs to improve forest management and give people a stake in the preservation of the forest, by providing them with sustainable forest based livelihoods.

My colleagues have provided excellent overviews of how the CBFP has evolved since its unveiling at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in September 2002. The CBFP includes a number of governments, donors, NGOs and corporate groups. USAID's Central African Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) is the primary implementation vehicle for the U.S. contribution to the CBFP.

With the Committee's indulgence, I would like to focus today on three main areas: (1) CARPE as the foundation for a strong effective partnership; (2) a review of steps taken to date including those in the area of selecting implementing entities; and (3) an outline of the steps to come.

The priorities of the CBFP/CARPE will be to:

- Encourage communities in the Congo Forest region to achieve a sustainable means of livelihood through well-managed forestry concessions, sustainable agriculture and integrated ecotourism programs;
- Help African countries develop a network of effectively managed national parks, protected areas and corridors; and
- Improve forest and natural resource governance by encouraging community-based management and economic uses of natural resources, combating illegal logging and enforcing anti-poaching laws.

CBFP activities will be linked to the conservation of 11 key landscapes in 6 countries in Central Africa. Landscapes are ecologically significant areas, some of which have been officially designated as national parks, and the outlying area.

A list of illustrative activities includes: training for rangers and game scouts; support for the development of community enterprises linked to landscape conservation; support for the adoption and strengthening of legislation related to natural resource management, including protected areas and forestry; support for regional processes for communication, collaboration and policy coordination; large-scale monitoring of forest access, land use and deforestation using remote sensing technologies; and the dissemination of materials that help provide citizens with information to participate in natural resources governance.

USAID will stress the importance of working with three African regional institutions: Conference of Ministers in charge of Forests in Central Africa (COMIFAC), the Conference of Central African Moist Forest Ecosystems (CEFDHAC), and the American Timber Organization. The USG, together with the partners in the CBFP, is now in a better position to support the aspirations of the African people in the region. Working together we can all make a big difference on the wide range of problems threatening the environment in the Congo Basin.

The USG proposes to invest up to \$53 million over four years (2002–2005) of which approximately \$48 million will be provided by USAID through CARPE in FY 2002–2005. The combination of the CBFP facilitation process and the field-based USAID CARPE management affords us an excellent mechanism to ensure that the USG resources are serving the most critical needs and are efficiently and effectively being spent on achieving results.

I agree with my colleagues that the foundation for the future of the Congo River Basin is the extraordinary role played by Conservation International (CI), Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) in focusing both public and private sector attention on the needs and opportunities of the environment in the Congo Basin. These partners are proving critical to the launch of the partnership.

Another key component of the CBFP is the past work of the partners in CARPE, USAID's most prominent natural resource management programs in Africa. CARPE was launched in 1995 with the initial purpose "to identify and begin to establish the conditions and practices required for the conservation and sustainable use of the natural resources of the Congo Basin, in a manner which addresses local, national, regional and international concerns." In so doing, CARPE helped to fill a major void by collecting important data on the Congo Basin. For the past seven years, CARPE has received annual USAID funding of \$3 million to address environmental needs in nine countries in the region.

CARPE has been active at a time of intense interest in the rainforests of the Congo Basin. At the same time, the international community has become far more aware of the Basin's importance in a global context, whether by providing a potential source of forest products or absorbing carbon dioxide. Conservation efforts and scientific studies, partially supported by funds from CARPE, have opened a window into a part of the world previously very poorly understood.

African governments, meanwhile, have become much more attentive to the forest; improving laws and institutions that manage it, and at the same time granting extensive concessions to log it. This emphasis on logging has been a response to increasing global demand for tropical timber. Those who live and derive their livelihoods from the forest are faced with increasingly difficult economic times, and have relied on the forest to deliver them more and more benefits in ways that may not be sustainable.

CARPE emphasized four subject themes: (1) improving logging policy and practice; (2) enhancing protected areas within a lived-in landscape; (3) encouraging better environmental governance; and (4) strengthening local resource management systems. These themes are in turn supplemented by three cross-cutting principles (promoting monitoring processes; improving training and institutional strengthening; and ensuring donor coordination). Generally, these themes have provided a sound framework for organizing the work of the partners. The results of the program are summarized in a document entitled, "Results and lessons learned from CARPE Phase I," which we would be happy to provide to the Committee.

Allow me to provide you with some examples of the activities that CARPE partners are implementing.

Improving Logging Policy

WCS has undertaken ground-breaking work in northern Republic of Congo (ROC) working closely with CIB (Congolaise Industrielle des Bois), a European logging company, to improve its practices. Collaboration between logging companies and NGOs is new in the area and is proving to be a promising partnership.

Enhancing Protected Areas

Protected areas have been the principal domain of WWF (in Central African Republic (CAR) and Gabon) and WCS (in ROC and Gabon).

Encouraging Better Environmental Governance

The conservation community in the Basin has found a role in causes such as reducing bushmeat consumption, a practice that threatens species, disturbs ecosystems and spreads disease. Community management of local forests (once exclusive to the national government and well-placed expatriate logging firms) has attracted a groundswell of attention in Cameroon. These and other examples around the Congo Basin indicate that, despite a period of significant physical insecurity in the Basin (ROC, CAR, and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)), the people and their governments are concerned about the deterioration of their environment and want to take action to halt this trend.

Strengthening Local Resource Management

Local resource management systems have been addressed by a number of partners, most notably Innovative Resources Management (IRM) in its work in Cameroon. This work has encouraged Africans to feel a sense of “ownership” of the forest. A number of small-grant holders have also done interesting and useful work, though all on a modest scale.

Monitoring the forest through use of remote sensing techniques has been carried out and has generated productive collaboration between partners, as well as a good interchange between the U.S. and field-based workers. It provides quantitative data capable of informing predictions and policy decisions.

CARPE has funded some excellent regional training initiatives, as well as funding capacity-building grants to local NGOs, which have displayed potential. These activities have mainly been in those countries where CARPE has a field presence.

In sum, CARPE and its partners have worked with great cost-efficiency to deliver a complex, flexible and imaginative contribution to forest conservation in the Congo Basin. That work has served to assure us that this recent significant increase in funding is based on tested methods, reliable data and experienced partners and will produce identifiable results.

It is essential to an effective partnership that there be a blending of the strengths of CARPE with the new emphases of CBFP. In developing the overall design document for CARPE, USAID consulted extensively with a broad NGO community (October 16–17, 2002) and with interested USG agencies (December 12, 2002) and formally approved the new CARPE Strategic Objective design document on January 17, 2003.

Furthermore, USAID is now emphasizing a transition for CARPE, moving from “learning lessons” to applying these lessons to action on the ground. In order to facilitate this change in strategy, in January 2003, USAID relocated CARPE management from USAID headquarters in Washington to the Congo Basin (USAID/Kinshasa, DRC). We believe that this change will greatly strengthen our presence in the Basin, affording many more opportunities to interact with all partners in assessing and addressing problems and opportunities on the ground.

USAID also broadly and extensively involved the interested USG agencies in developing the detailed criteria by which each technical proposal would be judged. These agencies include the State Department, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, the National Parks Service and NASA. The criteria fall into four broad categories: (1) technical criteria that are directly related to the specific results described in the Strategic Objective document; (2) management criteria that demonstrate strong and formal partnerships at several working levels; (3) geographic criteria that demonstrate a balanced approach across geographic zones and national boundaries; and (4) a clear demonstration and commitment to mobilizing non-USG financial and material resources that complement and match the USG financial contribution.

USAID has already taken important action to support those entities which will implement conservation programs in the Congo Basin. Using the “Leader with Associates” cooperative agreement process to take advantage of competed agreements already in place, USAID has requested applications from four major U.S. environmental NGO’s and is currently in the final stages of reviewing these applications. Critically important in these applications will be evidence that the NGOs have secured cooperation from the host government in the development of field activities as well as evidence that other NGOs active in selected landscapes can partner in field implementation. A portion of the funding will also support certain U.S. Government agencies with specific strengths that complement the conservation NGOs. Our

intent is that all fiscal year 2003 funding will be put in place for our implementing partners by September 30, 2003 so that they can proceed expeditiously.

As we look to the future, we realize that there are special opportunities to address environmental issues in the eleven landscapes that will be the particular emphasis of USG resources within the CBFP. We intend to ensure that the focus of CARPE will be on producing identifiable results within those landscapes which will be reported back to Congress.

Thank you for supporting the Administration's request and for your continued support of the Administration's efforts to promote conservation and sustainable resource management in the Congo Basin. In order to ensure that the USG's resources make a difference, we must respect the fact that this effort depends upon the people living in the Congo Basin to achieve a lasting, positive impact on the second largest tropical rainforest in the world. We have every intention of making that a high priority.

I thank the Committee for drawing attention to this important Administration initiative and I look forward to taking your questions.

Senator ALEXANDER. Thanks, Mr. Brown, and thanks to all of you.

Senator Feingold hopes he can come back, but we are going to move right ahead. I have a few questions, and then we will move to the second panel.

Mr. Turner's comment about our National Park System, I think, is appropriate here. One of the great contributions of the United States of America to the rest of the world, as well as to ourselves, was the idea of the National Park System and what we learned about it. Our family lived in Australia for a while and the Australians very shortly after the United States—the Australians modeled their national park system after the United States National Park System.

I wonder whether—Mr. Turner, you may know the answer to this, or maybe Mr. Brown—is our National Park Service, its planners, designers, are they involved in this effort?

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Chairman, we are pleased to have the involvement of the National Park Service. Especially we have asked them to focus on bringing their expertise and experience to capacity-building, i.e., training. We, with the Forest Service, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Park Service, we will do in-country training for professionals within the ministries in Africa. We will also bring Africans to the United States.

We have a trip planned with President Bongo and many of his officials—and perhaps President Sassou of the Congo—coming to the Yellowstone region this fall, where we can showcase Yellowstone, Grand Teton, and the Forest Service programs, Fish and Wildlife programs. So we definitely feel that our expertise and experience with national parks is going to be important in this capacity-building effort.

Senator ALEXANDER. We have learned in other activities that sometimes, even though we might have thought of it and we are bigger and wealthier than other countries, that sometimes it helps to have friends. The Australians are very proud of their national park system. They have learned a lot from it. I wonder if it would make any sense to involve the Australians in what we are doing in the Congo Basin Forest Partnership. They might welcome that opportunity.

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Chairman, we have had discussions with the Australians. They are interested. I might note that we do have 15 countries now involved in this partnership in addition to the 6 Cen-

tral African countries that Walter mentioned. South Africa has helped us facilitate it, but we also have the likes of France, Germany, the U.K., Belgium, the EU, Japan, Canada?

Senator ALEXANDER. What are they doing, what contributions? Are they doing specific things or are they just formally endorsing the idea?

Mr. TURNER. Everyone has made commitments. We are coordinating those to see which country is going to meet which needs, and that dialogue began in Paris last fall and we continue that. So it is a wonderful partnership of countries coming together, NGO's and the private sector. We are getting help from companies like Shell on basic biological inventories.

I think it is important to note that we are blessed with resources, as are other donor countries. The commitment that the developing world has made in the last decade to national parks is significant. And land protection, it is something I hope we can draw attention to and look at needs as the World Park Conference is coming up in Durbin, South Africa, in September; and we can all gather to celebrate this great idea and see how we can sustain it and grow it into the future.

But the developing countries, some of the poorest regions of the world, have made the largest commitment in recent years to protected areas.

Senator ALEXANDER. Thank you. The premier of New South Wales, Bob Carr, was the environmental minister for Australia for a long time, so he would be a likely suspect to be interested.

I have one other question before we go to the second panel. I notice in Mr. Brown's testimony and some of the other statements that, looking at the objectives, the priorities, encouraging communities to achieve a sustainable means of livelihood—that means jobs to me. Is that what that means, Mr. Brown? Then the second one is a network of effectively managed national parks; and the third objective is to improve the governance.

I am wondering if there is not something a little deeper here, and let me see if this is what you are thinking. I think it is, but let me see. My experience in government suggests to me that cities, counties, states, countries do best when they identify things that make them unique and special and then organize around those things to go forward. It gives them a sense of confidence, a sense of who they are, and generally contributes to progress.

When Memphis, for example, when it celebrates Beale Street and celebrates the Mississippi River and celebrates agriculture and celebrates its location in the center of the country as a distribution center, then Memphis does better because those are the things that make it different than, say—well, you do not find Beale Street in Knoxville. You find it in Memphis, and it celebrates those things.

So my thought about this is it is wonderful to protect ecological treasures, but maybe the greater contribution that your effort may make in Africa will be the byproduct, which will be to help build, to help African countries focus on something that is unique and special about their country they cannot find anywhere else; number two, to build institutions and ways of working together that will make that a success. A byproduct of those institutions will be to

solve other problems and create a civil society and a country that is progressive.

In other words, it is not just to save the parks; it is also to help build institutions that will create a stronger country. I am sure that is what you have in mind, but I wondered if any of you wanted to comment on that?

Mr. BROWN. Well, let me comment on that first. I think you are absolutely right. The goal I think of this entire effort is to promote sustainable development and to alleviate poverty for the benefit of the people. We must have buy-in by the people to this process to make sure that it is successful.

As you know and understand, what is happening right now is an unsustainable use of the forest in the basin, and to make a sustainable use of the forest will require economic development activities. So part of the process that we have laid out is to work specifically with community enterprises in developing ways in which they can use the forest in a sustainable manner and to generate sustainable agricultural practices. This will certainly contribute tremendously to the development of the individuals in these particular landscapes but for the countries as a whole.

I think you are absolutely right, and I think that commitment is there from the governments. It needs to be achieved with the people, the local people in the various landscapes. I think that the proposals that are being developed right now for work in these landscapes will have a major element in them of working with these local communities and groups to make sure that they have livelihood opportunities that are sustainable.

Senator ALEXANDER. Thank you, Mr. Brown.

Mr. Secretary, do you have any comment, or Mr. Turner, on that?

Mr. KANSTEINER. Go ahead, John.

Mr. TURNER. Well, Mr. Chairman, I think you are absolutely right. While we are all interested in the conservation of the wild resources down there, we first have to take care of people. The people of the region are betting their future, their economic future, their social and economic future, on this conservation plan. So we need to think jobs. We need to think income from tourism, from more sustainable use of forest products, ending the slash and burn agriculture. We need to think about fresh water availability and energy. We need to think about health care, the malaria and the disease issues down there.

So I think this administration, this President, has indeed looked at projects like this that would integrate social, economic, and environmental sustainability. So I know Secretary Powell and this administration are interested in how we are going to raise the wellbeing and the livelihoods and the aspirations across the board for the people of this region.

Senator ALEXANDER. Mr. Secretary?

Mr. KANSTEINER. Just one quick last comment. All six of these African countries have signaled and demonstrated their eagerness and willingness to pursue this partnership. That was not the case 3 or 4 years ago. The window is open. They are saying, we get it, we understand it, can you help us build it? So it is a tremendous

opportunity, and we thank you and the Congress for standing with us and supporting us.

Senator ALEXANDER. Mr. Kansteiner, Mr. Turner, Mr. Brown, thank you very much for your time. I hope this hearing helps put a spotlight on what you are doing. It is very important work. The Congress is interested in it. We admire Secretary Powell and the President for their focus.

I will be in Africa the last 2 weeks of August with Senator Frist. We will not get to the Congo, but maybe some time soon I will have a chance to do it again. This will be a continuing interest. Please keep the committee informed of what you are doing and of what help you need to succeed.

Mr. TURNER. Thank you.

Mr. KANSTEINER. Thank you.

Senator ALEXANDER. Thank you.

Now, if Dr. Fay and Mr. Mokombo will come forward, we will go to the second panel. [Pause.]

Senator ALEXANDER. I am going to introduce the witnesses. I barely recognize Dr. Fay all dressed up like that, but Dr. Michael Fay is an ecologist with the Wildlife Conservation Society; but that hardly tells the story. In 2000 and 2001 he led a 1200-mile year-long trek through the Congo Basin to catalogue the wildlife there. We read about it in the National Geographic in three issues. We have some copies here. I was introduced to him through the magazine of the National Geographic before I had the privilege of meeting him in person.

He is arguably the leading expert and conservationist on the Congo Basin today. I want to thank him especially for flying such a long distance to be here today from Africa so we could have this hearing, and we look forward very much to his testimony and using this hearing and the coming of the administration witnesses to signal the Congress' support for what is happening there and to get an update on it.

Dr. Tony Mokombo—thank you very much for coming—directs the World Wildlife Fund's programs in Central America. We are grateful for the perspective he brings. He is from the Central African Republic. I know he has been very busy with grant writing and program management as WWF is stepping up to the challenge and participating in the Congo Basin Forest Partnership, and I am grateful he took some time to meet with us today.

So, Dr. Fay, let us begin with you. We have looked forward to your coming, and we look forward to what you have to say.

STATEMENT OF J. MICHAEL FAY, PH.D., CONSERVATION BIOLOGIST, WILDERNESS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Dr. FAY. I was taking a shower last night, and I looked down at my feet, and they had dirt from the beach in Gabon. So I am fresh off the plane.

Senator ALEXANDER. Did you stay in a hotel?

Dr. FAY. No, I did not.

Senator ALEXANDER. I did not think so.

Dr. FAY. I thank you for having everyone here today to talk about the Congo Basin Forest Partnership, and I really did appreciate your last comments to the last panel about the deeper mean-

ing of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership. My testimony is going to try to address that, because I do believe, as you do, that that is perhaps the crux of what we are talking about.

The first time I met you, we talked about the Smoky Mountains National Park and how that really has set that region apart and how it has really shifted the way people think, the way that people act, the way people think about land use management, resource management, and the benefits from doing that. So I do believe that you certainly have a very close understanding of what we are talking about.

I am a little bit jealous that you only walked 1,000 miles on pavement and you became Governor and Senator. I walked 2,000 miles through forests, and I am still kicking around the forests of Central Africa. But some guys have all the luck.

Senator ALEXANDER. I think it may be you.

Dr. FAY. Parks do not just protect species. Parks change land use patterns. They influence government and private sector policy concerning the management of natural resources. They form the nucleus for an ethic of resource management, is what they really do. In fact, in most cases it is just a kind of a modern replacement of a similar traditional system of land use that has been lost with development and movement of people. Certainly a few hundred years ago in Africa if you ventured into someone else's territory and you started using resources that were not yours, you were in big trouble. In fact, you were probably dead. It is very important to recognize that land use management is not something new in Africa.

I have probably logged more miles walking long distances and learning about the forests of Central Africa than just about anybody else, and that is not bragging; it is just fact. Over the decades I have seen one thing that is very clear, that the land is quickly being colonized by human beings. It is often foreigners and they are after resources. They are after wood, they are after minerals, they are after oil, they are after wildlife, they are after fish, they are after arable land.

But today exploitation is mechanized; it is powerful; it is lightning-fast; and it is global. These processes that have been ongoing ever since human beings have existed are just happening at an incredibly accelerated pace nowadays.

One thing that has not changed over all that time, which is kind of surprising, is that when frontier areas are opened for land use there is usually little regard for the environment, sustainability, for the local people. Waste is completely accepted as part of doing business. Over the past 2 decades, about 70 percent of the forests of Gabon and Congo have been given up to logging companies, mostly Asian and European. Well over half the wood that is cut down for lumber is abandoned or burned. Wildlife populations are reduced, and local human populations become impoverished.

We heard about Nigeria earlier. You go to these oil areas, and there is unbelievable poverty in these places. Local people do not benefit.

It is no better in the oceans. In Gabon there are currently over 100 trawler boats operating off the coast of that country. Some 64 of those boats come from the European Union. Under an agreement with the European Union, those boats never dock in Gabon. They

are never seen in Gabon. Not a single one of those fish ever reaches the country. Fish populations are being hammered in Central Africa, because it is one of those last frontiers, and there is almost no control.

Only about 3 days ago, I was flying over small boats off the coast of Gabon off Loango National Park where we are working, and they have these long boats they call barracudas. They are usually manned by Nigerians and Beninois, mostly because there are almost no fish left in either Nigeria or in Benin off the coasts. What we saw on the bow of those boats was hundreds of shark fins, hundreds drying on the bow of these boats.

You can hardly believe your eyes, and you are flying by, and I see the name of one of these boats plastered on the side of it, and it says "Fear Tomorrow." That is the name of the boat, appropriately named. There is no question about that.

This kind of waste in frontier areas is understandable, but it cannot go on for very long before it really does endanger the future of these countries.

In 1903 Teddy Roosevelt made a trip across the United States, and he visited Yellowstone amongst other places. He witnessed the same kind of abuse of the landscape, people expanding outward to exploit every natural resource they found. If you can imagine then, it is estimated that there were only about 200,000 whitetail deer left in the United States, the entire continental United States, about 200,000 left. They were virtually exterminated, whitetail deer. Today, they are in almost every suburban garden in America.

The trip was not really about changing Roosevelt's attitudes about nature or the outdoors. In fact, he was a longstanding outdoorsman, and he kind of thought Muir was a little bit, you know, certainly too far left. What it really meant to him was that it was a crisis. He needed to do something. He needed to act. He needed to convince the American people that natural resource management was a national priority. Ecosystems and indigenous populations are bowled over in this process of resource exploitation.

During Teddy Roosevelt's tenure, he made the creation of 230 million acres of protected areas a cornerstone of his preoccupation. That is a lot of land, 230 million acres. What this leadership did in the case of Roosevelt was shift the ethos of this country. It made everyone start to think about natural resource management. It put it right on the forefront.

Teddy Roosevelt was very good about that. If he thought something was important, he was not afraid to just put it right out there and do it. What it really did is it launched a national debate. That national debate continues today. I mean, we see snowmobiles at Denali. That is something that is reaching Congress. Logging in national forests, that has been a major debate this year. ANWR, certainly. This is a debate that continues every day, all day.

In the Congo Basin we have an opportunity to consolidate what will be one of the most important national park systems in the world, over 25 million acres, and one of the richest areas for biodiversity on the planet. These parks will preserve, just as Yosemite and Yellowstone, innumerable species and beautiful landscapes.

But like Teddy Roosevelt, we have the opportunity to do much more. We have the opportunity to shift how entire landscapes are

developed to assure that future generations can sustain and enhance their lives. That is what we are talking about.

The Congo Basin Forest Partnership is, in my opinion, set up to exercise that model. It is not just about protecting national parks; it is not just about protecting logging concessions. It is to bring this issue to the forefront at the national level. The way to do that is not by talking about it in capital cities. It is not by centralizing educational systems and putting people through university. It is by working on the ground. It is by working in particular with local people in developing sustainable systems that actually protect their resources from wanton destruction by others.

We have come a very long way with the CBFP in a very short amount of time. It was unimaginable only a few months ago that we would get the U.S. Government to rally behind something like this. One telling thing is that it has brought organizations like WWF, WCS, CI, and AWF together for the first time. USAID should get a medal for that already, because that is unheard of.

The benefits of the CBFP have already started to accrue. Others have already spoken about the efforts of Gabon to create a system of 13 national parks covering 7.5 million acres. But more importantly, what that has done in Gabon is it has launched that national debate. It has appeared on a regular basis in the national newspaper. It is on TV. Everybody is talking about national parks. Everybody is talking about forestry management. Everybody is talking about that kind of division of that resource base, is it equitable, is it good, is it bad?

It has created conflict between ministries now. It is really elevating, and it is that groundwork that is percolating up. It is not this top-down kind of thing. It is a groundswell.

One good example that I have concerning these boats is, I have been concentrating in Loango National Park over the past few months in coastal Gabon, and one of the big problems there is these fishing boats. These trawlers come within hundreds of meters of the beach. They sit at the exits, the outlets for all the major lagoons, and they sweep up all the fish, because these fish go into these inlets. They sit at the mouth of these inlets, because that is where all the food is.

These guys, the limit is five kilometers; they come within hundreds of meters literally of the beach, and they scoop up all of these fish. Entire species do not even come in these inlets any more. There used to be a huge dorado influx at certain seasons in the Segala Inlet where I am working. The local people there have not seen dorado for years. But 10 years ago they were abundant. These people did not have to worry about where the fish were coming from.

Just in the past few months we have been using our airplane to fly over boats, dive bomb boats, take pictures of them, show them in the backdrop with the coast right there, get GPS locations of these boats. We have submitted over 30 reports to the government in the past 3 months. Lo and behold, those trawler boats are now gone. We do not see a single trawler. We have not seen a single trawler boat in the past 6 weeks at one of those inlets.

Again, this has launched a major debate at the national level. It has been in the newspaper twice in the last 6 weeks. It is the talk

of the town. The guys that are the perpetrators are kind of jockeying right now, but we are making real change there very quickly.

As the CBFP unfolds and we see all those kinds of activities unfolding on the landscapes, we will see these things getting to the national level every single day. It is an incredibly important project. I am not going to talk about the details, but we are talking about 25 million acres of national parks. We are talking about building infrastructure and management personnel in these places. We are talking about launching ecotourism. We are talking about managed logging concessions, a thousand personnel, etcetera, etcetera.

The immediate benefits are obvious, but what is going to be even more important is we are going to be bringing to the forefront this notion that resource management is incredibly important. This is a worldwide problem. Like Teddy Roosevelt said, natural resource management is the problem that underlies all other problems in the management of a nation, especially a young nation.

Fifteen to twenty million dollars a year for the CBFP is a good start, but we should invest more. If we are going to be investing billions and billions in managing AIDS, we should be spending billions and billions in natural resource management, because ultimately they are equally important.

We have not been paying enough attention to this broader partnership. We have not brought the Europeans in sufficiently. We have not brought in the African nations sufficiently. Congress and the State Department can be effective in doing that, but we have to up that effort.

We also and most importantly have to demonstrate to African nations that we are absolutely committed to the long haul here, that we are committed to working on the ground and getting these things going, not only in these 11 landscapes, but ultimately in many, many places.

NGO's benefiting from CBFP should be required to show how much money they are spending and where they are spending it on the ground. Congo Basin countries benefiting from CBFP should be trying to address a set of objective deliverables.

So in short, and I am going to finish now, this is for me a dream come true. It was one of the main reasons why I took that long walk through the forest, other than really enjoying that time I spent there. But you know, when you spend that amount of time walking through the forest you recognize the unbelievably rich wealth that is there, and to see it being destroyed for just careless reasons is in my opinion unacceptable, and we can have a major impact on that.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Fay follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF J. MICHAEL FAY

Thank you Mr. Chairman. I'd like to thank Chairman Alexander, and Senator Feingold for bringing us together today to talk about the Congo Basin Forest Partnership and sustainable development in Africa. Senator Alexander when we first spoke you told me about your 1000 mile walk across Tennessee and the impact it had on your impressions of what was important in your State. Then we talked about your homestead on the edge of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the

ways that this park has shifted people's regard for resources and their management in Tennessee, so I feel a bit like I am preaching to the choir.

Historically, if you look around the planet you would find that national parks quickly become local and national treasures, if government provides the structures that make those parks positive forces in local sustainable development. I spent last week in Gabon with a Belgian friend who was born in Rwanda and has worked in conservation his entire life. I asked him about Akagera National Park, which is a substantial chunk of Rwanda. He said while it is under increasing pressure and has lost some ground over the decades it is still there and it is not overrun. Rwanda has over 600 people/km sq. It may have the highest human population density on earth for a country that depends almost entirely on the bounty of the land for its survival. This park is certainly a tribute to the fact that even nations like Rwanda, that has experienced considerable turmoil over the decades, still finds a place for protected areas. I think that most would agree that in Rwanda the parks there have had a fundamental impact on the policies of that nation in the way it manages natural resources.

Parks don't just protect species. Parks change patterns of land-use, and they influence government and private sector policy concerning the management of natural resources. They form a nucleus for an ethic of resource management. In fact in most cases it is just a modern replacement of similar traditional systems of land-use that are lost with development and movement of people.

A few weeks ago I had my 25th anniversary in Africa. In fact Tony here has been a friend of mine since 1980. For most of that time I've worked to set up national parks as the nuclei for land-use management. Africa is my home and I do not regard this work as frivolous or irrelevant to basic human needs, or poverty alleviation, quite the opposite. In my book water, fertile soils, animals, and trees are more fundamental needs than health care, education or roads. Senator Feingold you come from the land of Aldo Leopold. I am sure that the residents of Wisconsin and you would agree that natural resource management is a fundamental for sustainable development.

I think I have probably logged more miles walking long distances and learning about the forests of Central Africa than just about anybody. I recognize that I am one of the most fortunate people on the planet to have witnessed such abundance in nature. Over the decades of living in the Congo Basin a simple observation to make is that the land is rapidly being colonized by human beings. When you read the history books I can imagine that it is much like what happened in this country in the 18th and 19th centuries: people expanding across the landscape looking to exploit resources. It is often foreigners and the resources they're after are wood, minerals, oil, fish and arable land. Today though, exploitation is highly mechanized, it is powerful, it is lightening fast and it is global. One thing that hasn't changed though, in frontier areas opened for resource use, there is little regard for the environment, sustainability, or for local people and waste is accepted as part of doing business. In the past two decades over 70% of the forest in Gabon and Congo has been given to logging companies, mostly European and Asian. Well over 1/2 of the wood that is cut down for lumber is abandoned or burned, wildlife populations are very reduced, and local human populations become impoverished. It is no better in the oceans, in Gabon alone there are over 50 locally operated trawler boats and some 64 other trawlers that operate directly out of the European Union which never dock in Gabon. Fish populations are being hammered in Central Africa because it is one of the last frontiers. For the past six months I have been doing a lot flying over these armies of trawlers, they often operate within spitting distance of the beach. Only two days ago I was flying over smaller boats from Nigeria and Benin with hundreds of shark fins drying on the bows where tons of sharks are discarded daily. This kind of waste is understandable for a certain amount of time but letting it go too long is very dangerous for nations.

In 1903 Theodore Roosevelt made a trip across the United States where he visited Yellowstone National Park and a lot of other frontier locations. He witnessed massive abuse of the landscape, people expanding outward to exploit every natural resource they found. If you can imagine at this time they estimate that there were only about 200,000 white-tailed deer left in the entire continental USA. This trip and others changed not only Roosevelt's attitudes about nature and the outdoors, in fact he thought Muir was way too liberal; witnessing massive waste of natural resources forced this President to act very decisively on natural resource management when most people thought there were more pressing development needs.

A speech Roosevelt made on Arbor day 1907 to the school children of the United States captures his thoughts on what became policy for this President:

We of an older generation can get along with what we have, though with growing hardship; but in your full manhood and womanhood you will want what nature once so bountifully supplied and man so thoughtlessly destroyed; and because of that want you will reproach us, not for what we have used, but for what we have wasted. . . . So any nation which in its youth lives only for the day, reaps without sowing, and consumes without husbanding, must expect the penalty of the prodigal whose labor could with difficulty find him the bare means of life.

During his presidency Teddy Roosevelt, with the Congress, made the creation of 230,000,000 acres of protected areas the cornerstone of this preoccupation. More importantly, what this leadership did, was to fully integrate natural resource stewardship into the basic principles of our national policies and ethos. It is always a debate, but it is a debate that has been part of land-use decision-making in this country for a century.

In the Congo Basin today we have a historic opportunity to consolidate what will be one of the world's most important national park systems of over 25 million acres in one of the richest areas in terms of biodiversity on the planet. These parks will preserve, just as Yosemite and Yellowstone have for well over a century in this country, innumerable species and beautiful landscapes. But, like Teddy Roosevelt, we have the opportunity to do much more. We have an opportunity to shift how entire landscapes are developed to assure that future generations can sustain and enhance their lives.

The Congo Basin Forest Partnership is an opportunity for this broad coalition of governments and NGOs to contribute substantially to putting in place a transformative model that integrates natural resource management into the foundation of development. The model starts with the identification of landscapes where land-use management systems can be put in place before the arrival of large-scale industrial resource exploitation and human expansion. This model does not call for the curtailment of resource use, only for well-reasoned land-use and resource management. It requires a ground-up plan that includes the creation and management of core national parks to protect the "biodiversity mother load," integrated with land-use management in exploitation zones in the surrounding landscapes that maximize benefits for local people. In my opinion in Central Africa any progress with AIDS, Democracy, or Conflict Resolution, without resolving the problems of resource exploitation will be fleeting. In the words of Roosevelt "the conservation of natural resources is the fundamental problem that underlies all other problems." For me this is what the CBFP is attempting to do to address this fundamental problem. If we don't there is huge risk that wasteful natural resource depletion will generate more countries that find themselves in need of direct and constant aid for their survival. Natural resource management must lie at the foundation of poverty alleviation, health, education, private investment and law and order. We only have to look as far as Liberia where rampant logging by fly by night operators has contributed significantly to the current mess. Our efforts in that country should be coupled with efforts to instill an ethic of natural resource management.

I am not alone, many organizations, American and European, are working with national governments on projects on the ground that are in various stages of implementing this model. All of the major US conservation organizations working on the ground in the Congo Basin (WWF, WCS, AWF and CI) are united in the belief that these ground-up projects provide a solid basis for sustainable development.

In my opinion the CBFP is a model that should be tried all over the place. It would seem that USAID are applying a similar approach to the delta of the Tigris and Euphrates and the marsh Arabs which have seen their natural resource base destroyed by Saddam. That should make Thessiger happy.

We have come a long way with the concept of the CBFP in a short amount of time. It shows that we can make huge shifts in our national foreign policy vis a vis sustainable development if we wish. This policy shift has been encouraged by Secretary of State Powell when he held a conservation round table in the forest of Gabon in Sept. of last year. Assistants Secretaries of State Kansteiner and Turner and Mr. Patrick Cronin and Connie Newman in USAID are to be congratulated for their vision.

Benefits of this policy shift are already paying off well before we have even begun the CBFP. Over the past year a combined effort of NGOs, the State Dept., and members of the US Congress have been working with the Government of Gabon and President Omar Bongo to successfully create a system of 13 national parks of over 7.5 million acres. I was visited last week by Congressman Bill Archer in Gabon who has been to central Africa several times since 1997. He spent four days in Loango National Park with me and relayed his support to the President for his bold initia-

tive of creating 13 parks. No doubt this move has launched a debate in Gabon about natural resource management, sustainability and benefits for local people. President Sassou and other Presidents in the region are also strong advocates for the CBFP and are gearing up for fundamental shifts in policy as well. We hope to be seeing President Bongo and President Sassou in Yellowstone in September to follow a bit in the footsteps of Teddy Roosevelt.

In the past two months we have been shaking up the fishing industry in Gabon. We dive bomb the boats with an airplane and take photos of the vessel and the surf, we get their names and GPS locations. We are collaborating with the officials in charge to enforce the law and are in the process of signing a collaborative agreement for fisheries law enforcement. We are pushing trawlers back to legal limits. These guys are getting called in and curiously we have seen a huge reduction in illegal fishing where I am working in the Loango National Park. Local people are seeing dorado come into the inlet for the first time in a few years, they are joining forces in the effort. This has launched a national debate, some people are losing out but many more are benefiting. Yeah there are behind the scenes counter efforts on going. But we are being strongly encouraged by local people right up to the presidency. The nation is abuzz with talk of the abuses of these boats. Pictures of illegal boats have appeared in the papers twice in past 2 months. The President is encouraging this effort because many are starting to realize the relationship between the vital importance of this resource to the nation and diminishing stocks. They don't have a choice if they want to have fish in ten years. The creation of the national parks has created a similar stir in the logging industry and oil industry and most applaud the action while a few have been hurt. Local people are starting to recognize the importance of forests for themselves. We had our first local consultation a couple of weeks ago in SE Gabon for the Plateau Bateke National Park. It is launching a debate about conservation locally. The results of those meetings were in the national news. Just in the past 6 months CBFP actions have been in the headlines in the national newspaper many many times. It is the talk of the town.

What is important to realize is that the work has just begun. The United States govt. has sent several trips to the region in the past year to demonstrate their diplomatic support of these policies. Now we absolutely cannot fail in our commitment to help Gabon, the Congos, and the other countries in the region to build infrastructure and capacity for management, help shift land-use and resource management practices, and increase benefits for local people. This is going to take significant resources, it is going to take lots of people working close to the ground with local people, it is going to take single-minded tenacity that is determined to get the job done despite the pitfalls and hurdles.

So what can we expect as deliverables from the Congo Basin Forest Partnership over the next ten years?

- over 25 million acres of permanent national parks in six Congo Basin countries,
- over 20 functional national parks with infrastructure, management personnel and a permanent place in the national landscape.
- over 50 million acres of managed logging concessions and other lands (including coastal waters) surrounding protected areas,
- over 1000 personnel working in natural resource management in the Basin,
- over 300 villages in and around the landscapes participating actively in and benefiting from resource management,
- increased sustainability for parks from tourism and other revenue streams, and national government participation,
- \$60 million dollars in private funds as a match to U.S. Government investment, and
- significantly increased management in domains like fisheries and forestry management.

The fundamental benefits of this project will be:

- creation of viable and operational national reserve systems,
- reduced rates of deforestation and biodiversity loss,
- reductions of illegal and abusive logging practices,
- reductions in illegal trade,
- increased civil society participation in decision making,
- increased U.S. influence in the Congo Basin,
- better governance and transparency,

- increased security over large areas, and
- sustainable development based on renewable outputs.

What I ask of Congress today is to assure the following: 15, 20 million dollars a year is a good start but I think we could easily invest 50 million a year in the Congo Basin alone and it would be a great investment. Even at 50 million it would be approximately 1000 times less than we are currently spending in Iraq. I urge you to press for funding in full for a substantial authorization. If it is paying off but we need to maintain the momentum and give this effort legs. I would encourage Congress to increase this kind of investment on a scale on par with what we are to spend on HIV/AIDs, I believe that its importance is similar in magnitude. Let's see where we are in a couple of years and then kick it up to 50 million. Liberia has cost billions over the past 15 years.

My perspective is that we have not paid enough attention to building a strong and coherent broader Partnership. This is absolutely essential if we are to succeed. We need to rally our European allies to be leaders in this effort. My impression is that they are not buying in as we hoped. This is going to require strong leadership and effort from the Dept. of State.

We need to demonstrate to African nations that we are absolutely committed to a long term process of assistance to bring our plans to fruition. This is going require a rigorous, nose to the grindstone dirty boot approach. Nothing can replace that. U.S. Government funding should be restricted to on-the-ground conservation that directly supports protected area and land (sea)-use management projects in the 11 designated landscapes. This needs to include construction of infrastructure, which we are told will not be allowed under the current agreement for bureaucratic reasons. We can not allow ourselves to drift into the notion that spending the money on studies, meetings and centralized higher education will produce the desired result.

NGOs benefiting to receive funding under CBFP should be required to show exactly how much money they get to the ground which needs to include a substantial matching contribution.

Congo Basin Countries benefiting from the CBFP should agree to address a number of objective deliverables. Funding should be dependent on progress such that countries that take risks to enact such a process also reap the maximum benefits.

I don't think that Teddy Roosevelt could have ever imagined that over 300 million people would enter the national parks in the United States in 2003. This is a tribute to his vision. I believe that, if we get it right, the CBFP will be one of the most successful programs ever undertaken by USAID in our search for a model of sustainable development. Land-use and resource management must be at the core. Please help to put the weight of the U.S. Government behind this effort.

Thank you

Senator ALEXANDER. Thank you, Dr. Fay.

Mr. Mokombo, thank you for coming.

STATEMENT OF TONY MOKOMBO, SENIOR PROGRAM OFFICER, WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA AND MADAGASCAR ENDANGERED SPECIES PROGRAM, WORLD WILDLIFE FUND

Mr. MOKOMBO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much for inviting me to this table here. This is another learning set for me. I have stepped in here in the United States, and I am seeing how things are going around, how you are dealing with this issue. The business and the leadership that the World Wildlife Fund has is the reflection of what the United States is doing worldwide.

I would like to thank the Zoological Society of Milwaukee that is here actually presently. We have been working with them in the conservation initiative also, we have been working with them.

As you introduced me, that was a great honor to elevate me to that position. I am the Senior Program Officer for West and Central Africa, and I am from Central African Republic, and it is a great honor for me to say that the conservation project started in my country, the Central African Republic, in the southwestern part

of the country, has expanded to become a model for the entire region.

Before further development of my testimony, I would like to seize this opportunity to thank the United States of America's government for its commitment and efforts to assist my fellow Central Africans and I to better conserve and save the wealth of biodiversity for the present and future generations through its governmental agencies, such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Forest Service, State Department, and the USAID.

This said, Mr. Chairman, the charge for this subcommittee hearing is to answer the questions, why is the Congo Basin Partnership needed, what is World Wildlife Fund's role in this partnership, and how will the grant be implemented? About the first question, Mr. Chairman, there is a saying in the Bantu language which is: One finger cannot pick up lice from the head, inside of the hair. This means that one organization alone within this huge mass of forested area in Central Africa would not be able to achieve the goal of conservation there.

So this partnership represents a defining moment for the Congo Basin. The stars are aligned and it is vital that we seize this historic opportunity to save the Congo Basin Forest. This is a unique opportunity for all of us to match the Congo Basin political will as expressed in the Yaoundé Declaration with the U.S. political will to support the conservation of the biodiversity in the region. The United States' timely show of financial and moral commitment helped tilt the balance in favor of conservation.

For many years, conservation organizations such as World Wildlife Fund, Wildlife Conservation Society, just to name these two, have struggled, not always successfully, to involve politicians, stakeholders, elites, and the local populations into the region's conservation efforts. Unfortunately, each time they took one step forward, two steps are taken back.

This partnership not only reinforces the will and commitment of the Central African governments to conserve the rich biodiversity of the region, but has consolidated the collaboration among conservation organizations in the Congo Basin. The NGO's, the World Wildlife Fund, the Wildlife Conservation Society, and Conservation International, combined their strength to develop the Congo Basin Partnership, whereas previously they were competitors, they were fighting.

About the value of the Congo Basin, I do not think that I will have to go back to this because you know more of my country than I do, you introduced it so very well. But what I wanted to say is that this tremendous forested area has been threatened by illegal logging, agriculture, bush meat trade, and the economic crisis that the region has gone through lately. The good thing is it is not too late. There are two good opportunities that we have to make the difference.

The Yaoundé Summit. The Yaoundé Summit created a unique opportunity for the governments of the Congo Basin countries to make commitments to forest conservation. This summit has elevated forest conservation and management to one of the most important issues in the sub-region and as such has marked a turn-

ing point in political commitment to forest conservation in Central Africa.

Since the Yaoundé Summit, 70,000 square kilometers of new protected areas have been created, attesting to the seriousness of these commitments. The ministers in charge of forests in Central Africa, charged with the implementation of the Yaoundé Declaration, in a collaborative body known as COMIFAC, which stands for the Conference of Ministers in charge of Forests in Central Africa, which is the council in charge of the forest in Central Africa, adopted the World Wildlife Fund-facilitated biodiversity vision for the Congo Basin Forest as the blueprint for conservation in the region and committed themselves to: conserve 10 percent of forested areas as a protected area; trans-border initiatives; the request for donors to address bush meat trades.

Gabon, for example, has set aside, in light of all the outcomes of Mike's trip, field trip, mega-transect, has set aside 13 national parks, and all this is under this structure. They have called to partnership with all stakeholders for sustainable management of the resources.

The Congo Basin Forest Partnership is the second opportunity. This partnership will promote economic development, alleviate poverty, improve governance and natural resource conservation in the Congo Basin, it is the most strategic relationship to have in order to achieve conservation goals in the region. It has also brought together donors, governments, public and private organizations to work and save the Congo Basin.

Since the Congo Basin is not only the lungs of the world, but supports globally significant biodiversity and maintains the global climate regime, hence mitigating global warming, there is a need for the world to invest in conserving this forested area. Due to the complexity of the conservation, a 3- to 5-year investment will only begin the process, and we Central Africans urge that Congo Basin Forest Partnership has a much longer term horizon.

This joint effort to conserve these fantastic 11 landscapes that have been mentioned earlier, backed by a longer term investment, will create employment for park guards, tourist guides, and tourism development, and community-based conservation development. The sustainable forest management will lead to economic development. With a proper investment, Mr. Chairman, we can create a conservation-based economy to replace the current exploitation-based economy that is devastating my country's natural resources.

What is the World Wildlife Fund's role in this partnership? Mr. Chairman, the World Wildlife Fund has played an unprecedented role in the region, influencing the political agenda to ensure that forest conservation is seen as a key policy issue for the governments of Central Africa. During the Yaoundé Summit, World Wildlife Fund had called upon the Central African governments to collaborate across boundaries and work in partnership with international aid agencies so that the forest protection is implemented on the ground.

Mr. Chairman, it took World Wildlife Fund years of perseverance and constant presence in the field to convince the Central Africans to join in protecting their heritage. If World Wildlife Fund had not been in my own home country, in light of all the political and social

disturbances, I am sure that no elephants or gorillas would have been left in Central African Republic.

World Wildlife Fund's long-term commitment has gained the confidence of its regional and national partners. World Wildlife Fund has been there in the good and bad times to help my fellow Central Africans and I become aware of the importance of conserving the biodiversity.

After the Yaoundé Summit, the six countries of the Congo Basin came back to this organization to assist them in facilitating the implementation of their commitments. World Wildlife Fund helped develop the conservation plan for the Congo Basin Forest by bringing together over 200 scientists from the region and elsewhere who defined areas of biological importance for different species groups. The 11 priority forest landscapes that have formed the basis of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership were identified in this process.

These landscapes cover species, habitat, and ecological process values of the Congo Basin such that effective conservation in these areas will ensure that these values will persist over the long term.

In my prepared testimony I give a brief overview of the World Wildlife Fund's program, global program in the document, so I will not extend on that. But I would like to give a quick, brief history of World Wildlife Fund in the region.

Senator ALEXANDER. Mr. Mokombo, we are going to have to wind the hearing up in a few minutes. So if you could bring your testimony—if you could summarize what you are saying. I have a few questions I wanted to ask both you and Dr. Fay before we end.

Mr. MOKOMBO. What I just wanted to give an example of how World Wildlife Fund operated in my country. World Wildlife Fund started working, went in the field, on the ground, and working in parallel at the governmental level. So the collaboration went all the way through from the bottom all the way to the top. While we were working on the ground field, the government through its Minister of Water and Forest started talking to his fellow ministers of Cameroon and Congo (Brazzaville) in order to join efforts to conserve what has become the Dzanga Tri-National Park in the region, which is the backbone of this landscapes strategy.

About the grant implementation. First, World Wildlife Fund and Wildlife Conservation Society, African Wildlife Foundation, and Conservation International have carefully worked out a team arrangement over the last few months through a series of meetings here in the United States and in the region. The teams are based on competitive advantage and real experience.

So the teams are going to work. The World Wildlife Fund will issue a subcontract with other U.S.-based NGO's, such as the Zoological Society of Milwaukee, the Bonobo Conservation, Innovation Resource Management, and also we hope to work with the United States Government agencies in the same landscapes, such as the Smithsonian Institution, the U.S. Forest Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Second, World Wildlife Fund and Wildlife Conservation Society have administered in Cameroon, Central African Republic, and the Congo NGO action grants with funding support from CARPE and the MacArthur Foundation. They subcontracted and provided se-

lected and motivated local African NGO's with resources to test and develop their capacity.

Let me assure you and the members of the subcommittee that the grant implementation will be very smooth. The USAID funding mechanism already in place is a great machine to disburse grants to partners of the Congo Basin.

Mr. Chairman, members of the Subcommittee on African Affairs, and guests of honor, the last 3 years have seen a dramatic change in Central Africans' perception of the importance of biodiversity conservation. This is an unprecedented moment for the Congo Basin. While the stars are aligned, and along the United States Government's will to foster this partnership and bring in other partners, it is vital that we seize this opportunity to save the Congo Basin Forest.

The only concern that I have is as follows: Is the 3-year program enough to achieve the goals of the CBFP? When I consider the socioeconomic problems that have hampered Central Africa and the greater number of people who still live in abject poverty, I say to myself, if only potential partners will extend this program over a period of 10 years with new and increased resources that will be very much appreciated by me and my peers.

On the behalf of my country, and the forest people of the Congo Basin, and as well the World Wildlife Fund, Mr. Chairman, members of the subcommittee, NGO's represented here, guests of honor, thank you very much for your attention.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Mokombo follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TONY MOKOMBO

SAVING THE CONGO BASIN FORESTS

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, what a privilege for "the Tallest pygmy" to testify before you today. I am Tony Mokombo, Senior Program Officer for the West and Central Africa and Madagascar Endangered Spaces Program at the World Wildlife Fund. I am from Central African Republic located in the heart of central Africa between the Democratic Republic of Congo and Chad.

We are here to discuss the Congo Basin Partnership and hence the future of the people in Central Africa and particularly those of the Congo Basin. Before further development of the subject I would like first to seize this opportunity to thank the United States of America's government for its constant effort to assist my fellow Central Africans and I to better conserve and save our wealth of biodiversity for the present and future generations through its governmental agencies such as the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the United States Forest Service (USFS), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

This said, Mr. Chairman, the charge for this Subcommittee hearing is to answer the questions, "Why is the Congo Basin Partnership needed? What is WWF's role in the partnership? And How will the grant be implemented?"

WHY IS THE CONGO BASIN FOREST PARTNERSHIP NEEDED?

Mr. Chairman, this partnership represents a defining moment for the Congo Basin. The stars are aligned and it's vital that we seize this historic opportunity to save the Congo Basin Forests. This is a unique opportunity for all of us to match the Congo Basin Political will with the U.S. political will to support the conservation of the biodiversity in the region. The U.S.'s timely show of financial and moral commitment helped tilt the balance in favor of conservation. For many years, conservation organizations, such as World Wildlife Fund, World Conservation Society, have struggled—not always successfully—to involve politicians, stakeholders, elite and the local populations into the region's conservation efforts. Unfortunately each time they take one step forward, two steps are taken back.

OVERVIEW OF THE CONGO BASIN: ITS VALUES, THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Congo Basin is the second largest tropical forest block in the world and contains some of the richest biodiversity in Africa. The biodiversity of the Central Africa region is immensely wealthy, richly endowed with species, habitats and landscapes.

In terms of vertebrate species diversity, the Congo Basin is rivaled only by South America and South East Asia, and is justly famous for its assemblage of savanna animal species and their predators. The forest bloc of Central Africa is a treasure house of over 10,000 unique plants; 1,000 birds and 400 mammals, among which we have 3,000 endemic plants, 42 endemic birds and 29 mammals. Many these endemic species are concentrated in the lowland forests and associated low hills at the eastern and western edges of the Basin. The Congo Basin Forests possess the most diverse assemblages of primates in Africa, including four species of Great Apes (two species of gorilla, bonobo and chimpanzee). The region's marine, freshwater and terrestrial biodiversity has the potential to provide significant—and sustainably managed—inexhaustible benefits for its people, the vast majority of whom still rely directly on natural resources.

What is the Current Situation?

Mr. Chairman, I had to leave my home-country to get a better understanding of what is happening under the canopy of our forested areas. In early 1990s, the international debate on global environmental problems led to the 1992 UN Conference on the Environment and Development. As the debate was defined by traditional North-South dynamics, we, Developing Countries suspected that the North was using the environment to impose further conditions on the terms of their economic development. We argued that much of the global environmental degradation was linked to Northern consumption patterns and the Northern countries had a historical responsibility to pay for mitigating environmentally destructive practices. Whereas the Developed countries believed that we in the South were interested in sustainable development only to leverage resource transfers from the developed world.

Even though we had committed ourselves at that period of time to contribute to the environment and development of our region, much of the requested funds from people of good faith from the North were used to address other economic issues rather than tackling the root causes of the biodiversity loss of our heritage. We did not have a clue of what the consequences of biodiversity loss could be. We did not understand the problem and respond to the underlying socioeconomic root causes of such loss.

Since the colonial era, which lasted for over 60 years, Central Africa has been principally a supplier of raw materials to other countries, in particular in forms of oil, minerals, timber and agricultural products. These resources that are fundamental to the future prospects for development within the region face a number of significant threats. Among the multitude of forces that had and have been driving biodiversity loss are:

- unsustainable mining, mineral exploitation, and logging practices;
- clearing of forested land for subsistence agriculture and hunting resulting from increased access provided by roads for logging and mining;
- and macroeconomic policies which may reinforce and perpetuate unsustainable practices.

Added to these threats are:

- the poorly managed protected areas;
- ineffective community based natural resource use;
- weak processes and institutions: Ministries with responsibility for planning, forest conservation and management, wildlife and protected areas are often different, poorly coordinated and their decisions may be over-ridden by hierarchically superior authorities and institutions; and
- regional institutions are even weaker with poor cooperation between countries, a situation that is exploited by elements in the logging industry and those who regard wildlife as a commodity, such as ivory hunters and bush meat traders.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE REGION?

The Yaoundé Summit

The Yaoundé Summit created a unique opportunity for the governments of the Congo Basin countries to make commitments to forest conservation. This Summit

has elevated forest conservation and management to one of the most important issues in the sub-region and, as such, has marked a turning point in political commitment to forest conservation in Central Africa.

On March 17, 1999, the Heads of State of six Central African countries, (Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon) met to discuss, at the highest political level, the problems of forest exploitation and protection in the region. This groundbreaking Yaoundé Summit was hosted and chaired by the President of the Republic of Cameroon and co-chaired by his Royal Highness, Prince Phillip, President Emeritus of WWF. At the conclusion of the summit, they signed the Yaoundé Declaration, which contains twelve specific commitments to forest conservation in the region. At the core of the Declaration is the recognition that protecting the region's forests requires a regional approach, coordinated policies and harmonized procedures, practices and legislation. The Democratic Republic of Congo subsequently ratified the Yaoundé Declaration in June 2002.

The Yaoundé Declaration was recognized by the United Nations 54th General Assembly (Resolution 54/214) as a mechanism to achieve sustainable forest management and conservation in Central Africa. The UN Resolution commends the Yaoundé Declaration as a framework for ensuring forest conservation and sustainable management for implementation both by the countries of the region and also by the international community.

CONGO BASIN FOREST PARTNERSHIP

Another opportunity is the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP), which we are discussing today, launched by the United States and South Africa along with 27 public and private partners at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg in September 2002. To this Congo Basin Forest Partnership, the US through its USAID-Central Africa Regional Program for Environment will make a substantial contribution.

The goal of this partnership is to promote economic development, poverty alleviation, improved governance, and natural resources conservation in Congo Basin through support for a network of national parks and protected areas, well-managed forestry concessions, and assistance to communities who depend on the conservation of the outstanding forest and wildlife resources.

Developing a coherent conservation strategy for such a huge part of the African continent, inhabited by such diversity of people, cultures, traditions and political systems, is a challenge in itself. The challenge becomes even greater as we consider the socio-economic problems that plague Central Africa. A great number of people still live in abject poverty and, in some countries, wars, civil unrest and political instability have or continue to hinder economic progress. It is a very crowded place—24 million people—and these factors, together with unfavorable trade and macro-economic policies, result in great pressures on the sub-region's forests, savannas, wetlands and marine ecosystems.

Successful conservation in the Congo Basin therefore still presents enormous challenges. There is, however, still time in many places to take a different development path that integrates economic growth and conservation of special places and respect for traditional cultures.

These places are the 11 landscapes that are the focus of the partners of the Congo Basin Forests, covering approximately 668,000 km² and containing 38 protected areas. Among the forests of Central Africa we can name the richly forested (but highly threatened) lands of Gabon, the unique sanctuary-like bai for elephants in Dzanga-Sangha (CAR), or the dramatically endemic forests of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Since the Congo Basin is not only the lungs of the world but supports globally significant biodiversity and maintains the global climate regime, hence mitigating global warming, there is a need for the world to invest in conserving this forested area.

The joint efforts to conserve these 11 landscapes will create employment for park guards, tourism guides hence tourism development, community based conservation development. The sustainable forest management will lead to economic development.

WHAT IS WWF'S ROLE WITHIN THIS REGION AND PARTICULARLY IN CONGO THE BASIN PARTNERSHIP?

Mr. Chairman, the World Wildlife Fund played an unprecedented role in the region, influencing the political agenda to ensure that forest conservation is seen as a key policy issue for the governments of the Central Africa. During the Yaoundé Summit, WWF called upon the Central African Governments to collaborate across

boundaries and work in partnership with international aid agencies so that forest protection is implemented on the ground.

WWF has facilitated the Yaoundé process by developing a plan for the conservation of the Congo Basin Forest, starting at a biodiversity workshop in Libreville in March 2000. This workshop brought together over 200 scientists from the region and elsewhere, who defined areas of biological importance for different species groups. By a process of amalgamation and comparison with existing protected areas and intact forest habitats, 11 priority forest landscapes were identified that form the basis of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership. These landscapes aim to cover the species, habitats and ecological process values of the Congo Basin, such that effective conservation in these areas will ensure that these values persisted over the long term.

The main process for operationalizing the biodiversity vision and the conservation of the 11 landscapes has been the Conference of Ministers in charge of Forests in Central Africa (COMIFAC). The first of these (COMIFAC I) was held in Yaoundé in December 2000 and the second (COMIFAC II) in the same location in June 2002. At COMIFAC I, the Ministers adopted the WWF facilitated Biodiversity Vision for the Guinea-Congolian forests as the blueprint for conservation in the region; by this same act they committed themselves to the conservation of 10% of the forest habitat in protected areas. These commitments are expressed in the Conservation Convergence Plan, which outlines a need to achieve the following:

- Gazettement of 10% of the territories as protected areas;
- Transborder initiatives;
- Request for donor support to address bushmeat trade;
- Call to partnership with all stakeholders for sustainable management of the resources.

Overview of WWF and its Global Program

Since its inception in 1961, WWF, as the largest privately supported international conservation network in the world, has invested in over 13,100 projects in 157 countries. WWF directs its conservation efforts toward three global goals: protecting endangered spaces, saving endangered species and addressing global threats. From working to save the giant panda, tiger, and rhino to helping establish and manage parks and reserves worldwide, WWF has been a conservation leader for 40 years.

In all, the WWF Network has offices and partners in over 40 countries around the world, working as a team toward an overall goal: “to halt and reverse the destruction of our natural environment.”

WWF's Global Program

WWF's primary objective is to conserve globally important terrestrial, freshwater and marine habitats and their plant and animal communities. However, conservation resources are limited, and we cannot hope to save everything, everywhere. So we must set priorities while trying to ensure that examples of all the world's diverse ecosystems are conserved. These examples include areas especially rich in overall species diversity, areas with species found nowhere else, and areas that contain unique assemblages of animals and plants.

WWF has identified around two hundred priorities of these important regions across the globe. They are called the “Global 200 Ecoregions.” Ecologists consider that almost half of terrestrial ecoregions are endangered, some critically so, while a further 29% are vulnerable. More than 40 of the Global 200 ecoregions occur in Africa and around its shores. The WWF Africa & Madagascar Program (AMP) has for many years focused its attention on four broad habitat types: forests, savannas, freshwater wetlands, and coastal and marine habitats. As we enter the new millennium, the AMP is ‘fine-tuning’ its habitat conservation efforts to those ecoregions where action is most urgently needed. WWF has identified the Western Congo Basin Moist Forest and Congo Basin Forest ecoregions as conservation priorities.

WWF History in Central Africa

For more than 20 years, WWF has been supporting the creation, development and management of conservation programs within Central Africa especially in Central African Republic (CAR), Gabon, Cameroon and DRC. WWF has signed a country agreement with the Governments of each of those countries, most recently in DRC in 2001, where we are in the process of reinforcing our presence.

WWF has worked in the forests of Central Africa with a focus on the Sangha Tri-National area of contiguous forests including northern Congo-Brazzaville, southwest CAR, and southeast Cameroon. WWF has supported the creation, development, and management of the Dzanga-Sangha Dense Forest Special Reserve and the Dzanga-

Ndoki National Park in the CAR, and of the Lobeke National park in southeastern Cameroon. WWF has a strong national program in Gabon focusing on Protected Areas Management and has worked with the Government on Gabon on the Minkebe Reserve in northeastern Gabon and the Gamba Complex for over 15 years. WWF has led the process of developing a trans-border landscape program centered on the Minkebe National Park, linking it to Dja, Boumba Bek and Nki Reserves in Cameroon and Odzala National Park in Congo (see Table 1: WWF's Presence in Landscapes). The WWF Ecoregion Program has collaborated with WCS to carry out the background surveys and studies that have led to the 13 new National Parks recently announced by the President of Gabon. WWF was instrumental in the development of the Central Africa World Heritage Forest Initiative (CAWHFI), supported by the United Nations Foundation and UNESCO, which seeks to increase the management effectiveness within three landscapes in the Congo Basin. These three landscapes, overlapping with CARPE/CBFP landscapes, are the Sangha Tri-National, the Gamba-Conckouati, and the Minkebe-Dja-Odzala landscapes. WWF, WCS, CI and the Jane Goodall Institute will jointly implement this program. Finally, WWF has played an instrumental role in the process leading to the adoption of the Plan de Convergence adopted by COMIFAC in December 2000, which includes a series of actions to be undertake to achieve the Yaoundé Declaration.

Current WWF Presence in Central Africa

WWF has a Central Africa Regional Program Office (CARPO) in Yaoundé, Cameroon, an Ecoregional and Program Office in Libreville, Gabon, and Program Offices in DRC and in the CAR, reporting to WWF-International in Switzerland. WWF-U.S. initiated the program in Central Africa and provides the principal technical and financial support to it, including all initiatives involving support from the United States, in particular, USAID. WWF Network funding for the region also comes from WWF-Netherlands, WWF-Belgium, WWF-International, WWF-UK, WWF-Denmark and WWF-Germany.

The WWF program for CARPE II is firmly rooting in the institutional context of the countries where it will operate. As such WWF has traditionally placed emphasis on working within the relevant institutional structures and on understanding their mechanisms of operation and weaknesses.

Mr. Chairman, there is a saying in our Bantu language that says: "One finger can not pick up lice inside the hair," which means here that one organization alone can not achieve the goal of conservation in Central Africa.

WWF's widespread partners and program activities in Central Africa are a reflection of this saying, along with the U.S. government commitment to the conservation of Congo Basin Forest. Over 20 years, WWF has established a network of regional program, and project offices in Gabon, Cameroon, and CAR to address conservation issues from the field. Such a field presence has allowed us to raise awareness of the important biodiversity in the Congo Basin, promote sustainable forest management and independent timber certification, and work towards establishing a network of protected areas which effectively protect forests as well as the people and animals which depend upon them. WWF's partners in these initiatives include governments, NGOs, local communities, international aid agencies and foundations, and the private sector.

Despite all the scaling-up of the conservation approaches and central African governments' commitment, biodiversity loss is still increasing. If we want to win the race against biodiversity loss we need a new approach that more effectively not only integrates socioeconomic policies with environmental concerns but a partnership among the Conservation communities and northern and southern governments.

Conservation is a truly complex undertaking that requires a wide range of people and organizations working together to achieve common goals.

The most strategic relationship to have in order to achieve conservation is this consortium (which includes WWF, CI and WCS) built up on what USAID has set up through its CARPE program in the Central Africa region.

GRANT PROCEEDING IMPLEMENTATION

The question that one would ask is how are these conservation organizations going to administer the grants and sub-contract with this complex partnership within a complex region?

Firstly team arrangements have been carefully worked out over the last few months through a series of meetings in the U.S.A., and in the region (see Table 2: CBFP Overall Teaming and Sub-Contract Arrangements in Landscapes). The teams are based on competitive advantage and real field experience. These arrangements represent the best way to direct the functioning of the landscape conservation approach in these different landscapes. Close coordination will be needed to ensure

that parallel methodologies are being used for the different parts of the program, and to allow reporting on the progress of the implementation of the programs at different landscapes. In all cases a landscape structure will be created to deliver components of the program in a way that they relate to the entire landscape and also to deliver the required reports to USAID. At a number of landscapes, WWF will issue sub-contracts to other USA-based NGOs such as Zoological Society of Milwaukee, Bonobo Conservation initiative, Innovation Resources Management. WWF also hopes to work with U.S. government agencies in the same landscapes, such as the Smithsonian Institution, USFWS, or USFS. These collaborators will complete specialist studies, such as surveys, measuring the area of remaining forest cover, etc, which are needed to deliver the different aspects of the program. Memorandum of Understanding will be written between WWF and the various agencies.

Secondly, making grants to partners is not something new to the International NGOs that are the backbones of this Congo Basin Partnership. WWF and WCS have administered in Cameroon, Central African Republic and the Republic of Congo, NGO Action Grants with funding support from CARPE and the MacArthur Foundation. They sub-contracted and provided selected and motivated NGOs with resources to test and develop their capacity in field conservation. In each country selection criteria was established and a committee of local conservation and development experts was formed to review proposals and award grants.

WWF is a founding member of the African Forest Action Network (AFAN), a multi-country network of African NGOs created in 1994. AFAN's purpose is to promote the conservation of forests and the sustainable use of forest resources, particularly for the well-being of the people. The network's activities focus on information exchange, advocacy, training, and facilitating cooperation among member NGOs. The MacArthur Foundation provided funding to support AFAN to develop and disseminate a quarterly newsletter and to provide training and technical assistance to its NGO members in advocacy and organizational development matters.

Together, AFAN and the NGO Action Grants program contributed to the foundation necessary to develop NGOs as a relevant force in local and regional conservation in Central Africa. These programs also provide a vehicle through which to identify potential partners for WWF initiatives.

Mr. Chairman, guests of honor, the last three years have seen years of dramatic change in Central African's perception of the importance of biodiversity conservation. With the technical assistance of conservation organizations such as WWF, WCS, CI and AWF, just to name these few, the countries in Central Africa have come up with a conservation strategy for this huge part of the African continent, inhabited by such diversity of people, cultures, traditions and political systems.

This is an unprecedented moment for the Congo Basin. While the stars are aligned and along the US government's will to foster this partnership and bring in other partners, it is vital that we seize this opportunity to save the Congo Basin Forest. The Congo Basin Forest Partnership and the United States contribution came in at the right time, supporting the Central African governments' conservation strategy and their convergence plan. I believe that funds should be in support of all the countries across the entire region. This will keep all the countries encouraged to work together for the good cause of the biodiversity conservation.

The only concern that I have, and I have been asking myself, is as follows: Is the three-year program enough to achieve the goals of the CBFP? When I consider the socio-economic problems that have hampered Central Africa and the greater number of people who still live in abject poverty, I say to myself if only potential partners could extend this program over a period of ten years, this will be very much appreciated. Since this is another education process that we are embarking on to bring the entire community to change their way of living and thinking, and adopt a new behavior.

Mr. Chairman, NGO representatives and guests of honor, thank you very much for your attention.

Table 1.—WWF Presence in Landscapes

Landscape Name	Current Activities and Presence
Gamba–Conkouati	WWF has an established field presence at this landscape for over 15 years. This is an established and mature program and considerable further progress can be expected during the coming 3 years.
Dja–Minkebe–Odzala (TRIDOM)	WWF has an established field presence in Minkebe and Dja, built up over a number of years. For the past 2 years WWF has also been working with GEF, ECOFAC and COMIFAC on cross-border issues. Considerable landscape work can be expected in this area over the coming 3 years, including the development of a shared management structure across national borders.
Sangha Tri-National (TNS)	WWF has maintained a strong field presence in Cameroon and CAR for more than two decades and first conceived this trans-border program. For the past 2–3 years, WWF has been working with WCS in Congo to implement a shared management structure for the entire area and considerable landscape level progress can be expected during the coming 3 years.
Lac Tele–Lac Tumba	WWF will establish a program at this site and will work with Bonobo Conservation Initiative and Innovative Resources Management to deliver aspects of the proposed work. WWF will carry out community based fisheries and fish surveys in this landscape, and will also assist WCS with the overall landscape measurement components of the program.
Salonga–Lukenie–Sankur	WWF will work with WCS to operationalize a large program at this important landscape, building on past work and field reconnaissance over the past months. Parts of the program will also be implemented by the Zoological Society of Milwaukee, who is present in the field, partially supported by WWF. WWF will collaborate with the UNESCO World Heritage Program.
Monte Alen–Mont de Cristal	Mont de Cristal is close to the Minkebe Forest and WWF will reinforce its current operation in the area, in particular for bushmeat control and anti-poaching.
Maringa–Lopori–Wamba	WWF supported bonobo research and conservation in this area for many years and will re-launch this effort partnering with Zoological Society of Milwaukee to deliver the proposed work at the Lomako landscape component.
Maiko–Lutunguru Tayna–Kahuzi Biega	Building on the past work that it has conducted in the area, WWF will collaborate with GTZ and UNESCO/WHP to deliver the Kahuzi Biega landscape component.

Table 2.—Partnership Overall Teaming and Sub-Contract Arrangements in the Landscapes.

	Landscape	Lead Organization	Countries in Landscape	Landscape Component	Lead Organization in Landscape Component	Secondary/Tertiary Involvement	WWF Sub-Contracts with
1	Monte Alen–Mont de Cristal Inselbergs	CI	Equatorial Guinea Gabon	Monte Alen Mont de Cristal	CI WCS	WWF/CI	
2	Gamba–Conckouati	WWF	Gabon Congo	Gamba–Mayomba Conckouati	WWF WCS	WCS/CI	
3	Lope-Chaillu–Louesse	WCS	Gabon Congo	Lope Chaillu Louesse	WCS WCS		
4	Dja–Minkebe–Odzala Tri-National	WWF	Cameroon Congo Gabon Gabon	Dja Odzala Minkebe Mwagne Ivindo	WWF WCS WWF WWF WCS	WWF/CI	
5	Sangha Tri-National	WWF	Cameroon CAR Congo	Lobeke Dzanga Sangha Nouabale Ndoki	WWF WWF WCS	WCS	
6	Bateke Plateau	WCS	Gabon Congo	Bateke Lefini	WCS WCS		

7	Lac Tele–Lac Tumba	WWF	Congo DRC	Lac Tele Lac Tumba	WCS WWF	BCI, IRM
8	Salonga–Lukenie–Sankur	WWF	DRC	Salonga	WWF	WCS ZSM
9	Maringa/Lopori–Wamba	AWF	DRC DRC DRC	Maringa/Lopori Wamba Lomako	AWF AWF WWF	CI ZSM
10	Maiko–Lutunguru Tayna–Kahuzi Biega	CI	DRC DRC DRC DRC	Itwombe Maiko Kahuzi Biega Taina	CI CI WWF	WCS WCS WCS
11	Ituru–Epulu–Aru	WCS	DRC	Ituri Epulu Aru	WCS	

Notes: ZSM = Zoological Society of Milwaukee, BCI = Bonobo Conservation Initiative; IRM = Innovative Resources Management

Senator ALEXANDER. Thank you very much, Mr. Mokombo.

Mr. MOKOMBO. Sorry to be so long.

Senator ALEXANDER. Let me ask this general question. Dr. Fay, you have as broad a view of all this as anybody. As you look ahead the next couple of years, what are the two or three most important things that you would like to see accomplished in the next 2 or 3 years?

Dr. FAY. We need to consolidate this partnership. I think that is extremely important.

Senator ALEXANDER. How do you mean? How do you mean that?

Dr. FAY. The resources that are being brought to bear by the U.S. Government are going to be insufficient to do what we have set out to do, and that is why this partnership was created. But this contribution from other nations, especially the EU and their member states, some of the Asian nations, Japan, somebody mentioned Australia, Canada, various other nations around the world, have to be brought in and, like the NGO's have done on the U.S. side, figure out exactly what role they play and what piece of the puzzle they can help with.

We have to use this partnership to figure that out on a more general basis.

Senator ALEXANDER. Is there any other—do one or two other nations stick out as more interested than others right now?

Dr. FAY. Well, certainly the EU is extremely active in the area and has been collaborating with all the partners for a long time. But there is not yet a coherent kind of strategy that is a unified one; that is very, very important, not only for the action on the ground but for that kind of groundswell, sending a clear message that is a unified one.

We need to reinforce the notion in Central African countries that this is going to be a nuts and bolts operation; this is not going to be more fluff. A lot of conservation is about fluff; a lot of African nations accept it, but they think it is more fluff. This is an effort, and it has been right from the beginning, to say, no guys, this is a ground-based, ground-up nuts and bolts operation. Let us get the job done on the ground. It will trickle up every day of the week all day.

People on the ground are going to start saying that this is what we are talking about. One of the ministers in Paris said something about not wanting budget-devouring projects, which means projects that just eat budgets, and we have seen a lot of those. I think it is extremely important, and the CBFP has been good about making the focus remain on the landscapes. But I think we just have to keep beating that thing and say we really do need to keep it on the ground.

We have to remain focused on building infrastructure, on training management personnel, and integrating local people. That is the key. If we do that we can create a new ethos in these countries. Even a country as vast and as varied as the DRC, will experience a very telling impact.

People are talking about Ituri, for instance, and we have seen all the warfare going on out there, the chaos. It is all about resources. People from Rwanda and Burundi and eastern DRC are moving west. Why are they doing it? It is not because they hate those peo-

ple. It is not because they like to be at war. It is because they are looking for resources.

When you think about a ground-up resource management project working out there with resources that they need, that whole scenario could shift very quickly, and I really believe that. I do not think that is pie in the sky. I really think it is reality.

In northern Congo, when we had a major civil war in 1997, like Tony says, we stuck it out, and we absolutely had a major impact on stability in that area, over a vast area. We calmed people down. We got people to think about getting back to the villages and carrying on with their lives, and that is what happened. It is a far-reaching thing.

One thing I would like to mention that I forgot is there is some kind of restriction over at USAID that is saying that we are not going to be allowed to build infrastructure with the CBFP funding. I am not sure if that sticks today, but that is something—I have been in the wilds of Gabon for the last several months, so I have not really gotten the details.

Senator ALEXANDER. What kind of infrastructure?

Dr. FAY. Park headquarters, out camps, training centers, things like that are desperately needed in the field. Part of what we do, a very important part of what we do, is providing infrastructure for national parks and for management in these areas. If we cannot do that, I think it takes a lot of the wind out of the sails. Something that is very important in Africa is brick and mortar. If they see the brick and mortar, they think, okay, these guys are serious. And if we come in there and say, sorry guys, we cannot do that, that is going to be a major impediment. I do not think it would be that difficult to get that restriction lifted.

Senator ALEXANDER. Well, we will work on that. What else can we do to be helpful? What else could the committee do right now to help you or Mr. Mokombo?

Dr. FAY. Making sure that these resources do not get—do not leak into grandiose research programs and programs that are going to give us some kind of diffuse impact that we talk about. Again, we have got to just keep it on the ground and just make sure that what we have promised ourselves, landscapes, national parks, personnel, local people, keep hammering at that.

That is a relatively easy thing to do, to make sure that happens. If we do not make sure that it happens, we are going to be talking about A to Z, we are going to be talking about from ground all the way up to outer space, and we are going to be thinking mostly about outer space. I think that the ground is extremely important. We need to keep that focus.

Senator ALEXANDER. What kind of resources? We heard Mr. Mokombo talk a little bit about the Central African Republic and the effect this has had in his country. What kind of resources are the government of Gabon putting into the effort?

Dr. FAY. Tony, myself, and Richard Carroll, who is sitting in the back, all started 20-some years ago working in the place that Tony is talking about, Dzanga-Sangha. WWF has been there all day every day for the past 15 years and it has made a dramatic impact on the way forest resources in southwestern Central African Republic have unfolded.

The governments have been contributing as much as they contribute and probably a lot more than they do in many other domains. So for instance, right now, where I am working in Gabon, Loango National Park, the government has a significant number of personnel working on the ground. Those personnel are not necessarily effective. They do not necessarily use the means that they have at their disposal effectively. They do not necessarily have the training or especially the skills that they need to really get down and just get the job done in these protected areas.

They have got the theoretical training, most of them. But when you get right down to the level of, okay, what do we need to do, guys, there is a fishing boat out there, how are we going to get those guys back to the legal limit. Over time these governments are putting more and more in, but I really do not believe that we are going to be able to convince them to take over this program in 3 years. There is no way.

WWF, WCS, all these organizations, are not really even thinking about leaving this area. I mean, it would be like saying the Sierra Club in the United States is going to wrap up operations in the next 3 years, because local governments and national government are going to take care of it. That is not our mentality. Our mentality is stick to it forever. What is wrong with that?

Whatever happens, U.S. Government investment in this domain will pay off handsomely. If you look at Liberia, which was another subject we talked about earlier today, and you look at the turmoil that has unfolded there in the last 10, 15 years, in my domain what did we talk about there?

We talked about the logging companies that evolved into money-laundering operations from the Middle East in Liberia. I will not point my finger at anyone, but there has been a lot of talk about using Liberia as a base much like Afghanistan was being used, not so much for training or whatever, but as a center for moving money, for instance, and various other things.

If we had brought transparency and had worked with the Liberian government in the logging domain over the past 15 years and invested even hundreds of millions of dollars in that domain, we may have saved billions in peacekeeping. I don't know, but I think that these investments, we cannot regard them as short-term where the governments are going to take over. We have to look at these as long-term investments that will save the West large amounts of money in the medium term.

Senator ALEXANDER. Well, we are grateful for what you, Dr. Fay, and you, Mr. Mokombo, have done over the years. The purpose of this hearing today, as I mentioned earlier, is to put a spotlight on that work and to provide you an opportunity to submit, both through your testimony and through any additional statements you would like to get in within the next few days, ways that the United States Congress can be helpful to the State Department and the USAID as we move forward with this.

Our subcommittee will continue to have an interest in the basin and this partnership, and we will be looking for ways to help it succeed.

Mr. Mokombo, did you have any other comment you would like to make?

Mr. MOKOMBO. I just wanted to add that we are actually embarking on an education process for my peers in the region, to bring them or the entire community to change their ways of living and thinking and adopting new behavior. This is going to take time there, time and persistence. So your having a long-term horizon vision will be very much appreciated.

Senator ALEXANDER. We will look forward to additional hearings on this subject and visits in Africa to try to see that the United States' participation is as effective as it can be.

I want to thank you, Mr. Mokombo, for being here. Dr. Fay, thank you for coming such a long distance.

Dr. FAY. Thanks for having me.

Senator ALEXANDER. And thank you for your work.

Mr. MOKOMBO. Thank you, too, and you have my invitation to visit Gamba. There is a beach in Gamba where all the animals come for sunshine. It is awesome. So you have got my invitation for that. The members are also invited.

Senator ALEXANDER. Thank you very much.

The hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:09 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]